

SIQONDEPHI MANJE?

Indatshana zase Zimbabwe

Ziqoqwe zahlelwa ngu Jane Morris
Zitolikwe zisuka esiLungwini zisiya esiNdebeleni ngu Thabisani Ndlovu

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nguThabisani Ndlovu



'amaBooks

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Isibongo

Okokuqala, ngithanda ukubonga uJane Morris, umhleli wogwalo lwesiLungu oluthiwa, *Where to Now? Short Stories from Zimbabwe*, ngokungipha ithuba lokutolika indatshana ezikuleliqoqo ngizisa esiNdebeleni. Ngibonge njalo abalobi abakulolugwalo, ukungivumela ukuthi ngitolike indatshana zabo. Ngibabonge njalo, ukuthi basitholile isikhathi sokusebenza lami munye ngamunye, behlola ukuthi indatshana zabo zitolikwe ngendlela esuthisayo. UZanele Muyambo nguye ofunde lolugwalo lungakadindwa, ecolisisa okudinga ukucolwa – ngiyabonga laye. Emsebenzini omkhulu kangaka, kuyabanjiswa. Umkami, uSiphathisiwe Ndlovu, bengixoxa laye ngezindatshana lezi kunye lokusetshenziswa kolimi lwesiNdebele. Ngiyabonga nkosikazi – uphathise kakhulu.

Isandulelo

Enye yezinjongo eziqakathekileyo ekutolikeni indatshana ezikulolugwalo, yikuthuthukisa ulimi lwesiNdebele kunye lokukhuthaza abalobi bakuleli ukuthi babhale ngalolulimi. Kube lithuba elihle-ke ukutolika ezinye zezindatshana ezibhalwe ngobuciko iZimbabwe yonke jikelele. NgesiLungu, zilotshwe ngobuciko lezindatshana – zilomfutho, ziyahlakaza, ziyahlekisa, ziyadanisa – zivusa usinga. Ezinye zephula imithetho esiyijayeleyo mayelana lokuphawula ukubhala. Uthola ezinye zintantalaza zingasebenzisi isiphawulankulumo ngitsho; ezinye uthole zivubanisa okwenzakala kudala lokwenzakala ngesikhathi sokulandisa indatshana. Konke lokhu ngizame ngendlela zonke ukuthi kukhanye kla ekutolikeni. Ozifundayo lezindaba ngesiNdebele, uzajabula ukuthi kulutshwane okulahlekileyo. Lokho kungoba ngithethe isikhathi eside ngizifunda, ngizilalelisisa, okukadokotela lomtshina wakhe, elalele ukutshaya kwenhliziyo. Ngaleyondlela-ke, uzathola ukuthi ulimi olusetshenzisiweyo lufanele indatshana yakhona; lulimi njalo olusetshenziswa ngabantu bakulezi nsuku.

Bakhona abazasola, njengoba bengasweleki. Ngiyabezwa besithi, ‘Lelo libala lesiLungu, ayisilo lesiNdebele.’ Kumbe bathi, ‘EsiNdebeleni iziqa zamabala azilandelani ngaleyo ndlela.’ Kuthi abanye uzwe besithi, ‘Kulamabala athi bhadla kakhulu endaweni yokuthi kusetshenziswe ahloniphayo.’ Nansi imizekeliso. Sonke siyayazi ifriji. Ukukhuluma ngekhobothi yomqando lokunye okunjalo yinkalakatha yenhlekisa. Ukhona oyibiza esithi ‘firi’? Kusuka kube yisiShona nxa singafaka u ‘i’ ngemva kuka ‘f.’ Ngokufanayo, iphaspoti yiphaspoti, iplastiki yiplastiki. Uzathola amabala afana lo ‘hlanza,’ ‘izibunu,’ lamanye anjalo. Amabala la awaphoselwanga nje. Ukusebenzisa ahloniphayo bekuzathundubeza indatshana, kuthi lokho obekufuna ukutshiwo ngumlobi kungacaci. Besengisithi umsebenzi wami ngowani? Kanti njalo amabala amanengi abanye abathi akumelanga abhalwe phansi ngamabala esiwakhuluma nsuku zonke kungakhathalekile ukuthi ngubani okhona. Asithathe elithi ‘izibunu.’ Uzwa bethi abantwana abahawulayo, abangela zigqoko ezizwayo, ‘bahamba ngezibunu egcekeni.’ Olezibunu ezinkulu ngolezibunu ezinkulu; ongalazo kalazo – sikhuluma njalo kungabi lehlazo. Pho-ke kusuka ngaphi ukuthi sifune ukukuguqula lokho nxa siloba? Ngicabanga ikakhulu okwenzakalayo

kulezizindatshana. Umlingiswa othukutheleyo kumele kukhanye ukuthi uthukuthele, langendlela asebenzisa ngayo ulimi. Njengomtoliki, ngilomlandu wokuthi indlela indatshana elotshwe ngayo ngesiLungu ingasuki yehlukane kakhulu lengikutolikileyo.

Izikhathi ziyatshintsha, abantu labo batshintshe, lolimi lwenze okufanayo. IsiLungu saphumelela ngaleyo ndlela – siseboleka amabala, sibuye siphange ukufaka esiphahleni amabala aguqulwe yisikhathi. Abanye bathi isiNdebele sesisifa. Engivumelana lakho yikuthi ingwalo zesiNdebele asisakwazi lokuzibona, kudala zacina ukudindwa. Kodwa ulimi lona ngokwalo luyaphila. IsiNdebele salamhlanje ngeke sifane leseminyakeni engamathsumi amabili adlulileyo. Kulamabala okumele siwamukele njengamabala esiNdebele. Amabala afana labo ‘skulufizi’, ‘eralini’, ‘iklasi’, ‘ukudiza’, ‘drayiva’ kunye lo ‘khostoma.’ Kuhle sibili ukufuna amabala esiNdebele qho, afana lokuthi ‘umtshayeli’ kumbe ‘tshayela.’ Bangaki abakhuluma ngaleyo ndlela? Ukuthi ulimi lungafi, abantu abalukhulumayo baluthande lalapho selubhalwe phansi, kumele kube lulimi abalujayeleyo, olwansukuzonke, hatshi olwantolontolo. Angitsho ukuthi wonke amabala amadala kumele siwalahle. Nxa sisebenzisa igama, kumele sizibuze ukuthi yilo elingcono na lapho esilisebenzisa khona? Kukhona njalo indlela ezintsha zokukhuluma. Abantu bakhuluma ngestayila, ngokungena ku imeyili, ngokuhlaba (ukugqoka) ijini. YisiNdebele sonke leso.

Mthwakazi, sengikhulume kwenela. Ulimi olukhulayo ngolusetshenziswayo, kuvunyelwa amagama amatsha lendlela ezintsha zokukhuluma – indlela ezikhomba ubugabazi babantu ekusebenziseni ulimi. Lokhu kuzadala ukuthi ababona ubugabazi babanye, bazwe belentshukuntshu yokusina ngcono. Ngithemba lizathi ngokufunda lezizindatshana, libe lomfutho wokuthuthukisa ukuloba lokukhuluma isiNdebele.

Thabisani Ndlovu
Johannesburg 2014

Inyamazana yendoda leqhalaqhala lomfazi

Mapfumo Clement Chihota

Asimandla uBulelwa, yisambane, ikakhulu nxa ezondile. Kadinganga kuncediswa ukukhupha konke okubiza yena ekamelweni lami: izigqoko, ingubo, umtshina wokuwatsha, idabuli bhedi, umntwana.... Umzawakhe uNompfi wathi ebona umfula uthwala lezigodo, wathi nyawo ngibeletha esiyaphuma igedi. Umngane wami uChikoko, wadobha enye yezingubo zami wazithandela ngayo wazihlalela esihlalweni esintofontofo endlini yokuhlala, qede wawozela. Mina ngangimile nje, okomuntu obanjwe yigetsi, ngibukele uBulelwa ekhupha yonke into endlini. Wathi eqeda lapho watshayeleva isivalo wahamba. Ngemva kwalokho ngangena ekamelweni lami, lapho okwakungathi kusanda kudlula inkalakatha yesivunguzane. Ngokudela, ngazilalela phansi.

“Akutsho, sowake wabona umfazi lendoda bexabana kumbe besehlukana?” Kwakuyindlela yami yokuqala ingxoxo loChikoko; indlela yokuziduduza ngemva komhlolo kaBulelwa owahle wabasela amakhanda ebhabhalazi. Kwakungumzamo njalo wokuthi mhlawumbe amakhanda ebhabhalazi angathula ukukhanda. Ngimbuza nje uChikoko sesisekhitshini emini yantambama, siphekela ukudlela lentambama. Ngasengimqalile u Chikoko ngoba uvele uphiwe emlonyeni lapha.

“Ngangingumntwana ngiyibona ingxabano enjalo. Kuze kube lanamuhla angilaqiniso lokuthi ngangizwisisa yini ukuthi kwenzakalani.” Ame kancane uChikoko, aphosele itamatisi esitshebeni linjalo engalisikelelanga. Abeseqhubeka, “Uyabona, ngangilomalume owayetshaya umthetho njengomthetho emzini wakhe. Kodwa umthetho owawuthi ungephulwa aphose ukubulala umuntu, ngowokungena engadini yakhe yebilebile. Wayetshaya phansi ngenduku esithi akulamuntu *ngitsho loyedwa*, okumele alugxobe engadini yakhe yebilebile. Ingadi le yayithe sece emdulini wendlu yakhe yokulala. Kwakunguye kuphela ohlakulayo aphinde athelele.

Lalimvuma ibilebile lakhe! Kwakuyimzila emine kumbe emihlanu eyezihlahla zebilebile, zifolile. Ibilebile ngokwalo lalisezigabeni ezitshieneyo zokuvuthwa: kuthi eliluhlaza tshoko, kuzothi elingamathube, kunye lelibomvu gebhu!

“Kulezinto ezimbili ezenza abantu bacabanga ukuthi kukhona okwakukhonayo ebilebileni likamalume. Okokuqala, umkakhe wabeletha amaphahla angabafana kwaze kwaba kabili, amanye amadoda etshaya amankazana kuphela. Waphosa wawabulala lamaphahla okuqala, ecatsulwe yikuthi ibhola leplastiki ayelidlala lawela engadini yebilebile wona asengena esiyalidobha. Amahungahunga ayethi amandla kamalume endabeni zemacansini ayephuma kulo leli bilebile lakhe. Kuyini okwakungamenza aphose abulale umuntu, embulalela izihlahla zebilebile? Yini njalo into eyayimenza athole abantwana abangabafana ngababili ngababili amanye amadoda ethwala nzima khona nje ukuthola abantwana abangamankazana njalo bezalwa munye ngamunye?

“Ngasikhatshana nje, yonke indoda esigabeni yayisiligxozela amathe ibilebile likamalume. Noma nje umalume wayehlala ethule, engangeneki lula, amanye amadoda aphemba ubungane, efisa njalo ethandaza ukuthi ngelinye ilanga umalume angawazwisa ibilebile lakhe. Umalume wayekubona konke lokhu epholile nje. Kwakuthi nxa indaba yebilebile isibhoboka, ahle avuke ubhova. Wayeqala ngokuhleka yedwa, atshaye izandla, anikine ikhanda okomuntu okhuza umhlolo, okwendoda ezwe umakhelwane ecela ukulala lomkayo. Khonokho nje abophe ibunzi. Phela ukuhwaqa kukamalume kwakusaziwa, kubatshazwa isigaba sonke. Kwakuqala kancane emlonyeni, kukhwele kuye ebunzini, uthole ibunzi selingamavinqovinqo engathi yibulongwe benkomo busoma elangeni. Abanengi babethi bangambona esehwaqe kanje bagoqe imisila bavalelise. Kuthi-ke abalesibindi bagagase, bangungune bexolisa, baphange batshintshe ingxoxo – phinde bayithi vu eyebilebile.

“Konke lokhu kwenza isigaba sonke safisa ngamandla ukulizwa leli bilebile. Omunye undoda kuthiwa weza phakathi kobusuku. Wayaphumputhe, wayaphumputhe ezihlahleni zalo, ngitsho ukuthi alizwe kumbe alibone lona elilodwa. Akuzwayo yinduku kamalume esiphundu. Lindoda yahle yaba loduma olungapheliyo esiphundu – isibonelo solaka lukamalume lokuqakatheka kwebilebile lakhe. Ngemva kokunqondwa kwalendoda ngenduku, ibilebile labalendumela engakaze ibonwe muntu. Ukuthi uze ubone ukuqakatheka kwalo, kwasekuthiwa ibilebile elilodwa nje, hatshi isihlahla, lalingabiza inkukhu ezithize. Izilinganiso lezi zahamba zazezafika endlebeni kamalumekazi. Njengomuntu owayengathi umthambo wemali uyawazi, wasibona sesifikile isikhathi sokukhanda leyo mali.

Ngasese, waqala ukuthengisa ibilebile likamalume. Libiza, hatshi okokudlala! Kodwa wayelithengisa nxa umalume ehambele khatshana okwensuku ezithize. Ibhizimisi kamalumekazi yaba ngeyeviki kuphela. Phela umalume wayewazi amabilebile akhe linye ngalinye, sihlahla ngasihlahla. Phezu kwalokho wayesazi ukuthi nxa elibamba, linye ngalinye libunjwe njani, linganani njalo lingumbala bani. Wayeyazi indlela ayesikha ngayo yena. Wayehle abone nje nxa likhiwe ngomunye umuntu. Kwenzakala nje ukuthi ngibekhona ebuza umalumekazi ngebilebile lakhe elalikihiwe. Wagagasa ngolaka umalume wathi, “Ngu... ngu... ngu... ba... ba... bani... othi... thinte... ibi... bi... lebile... la... la...?” Umalumekazi akazange alindele ukuthi aqede. Wathi lothu wacela enyaweni okomvundla ovuswe yizinja esikhundleni. Wayegqoke isigqoko esibomvu. Umalume yena wayegqoke ihovorosi eluhlaza lokulithanga. Sabukela ukuphazima kokuluhlaza-thanga ngemva kokubomvu, imibala yonke yaze yayatshona eqaqeni elibucwawlana. Kwaba yikucina kwami ukumbona umalumekazi. Ngangivele ngisiya esikolo ebhodingi ngelanga elilandelayo. Engikwaziyo yikuthi ekuphendukeni kwami ngemva kwenyanga ezine, umalume wayesethethe omunye umfazi. Kalula kanjalo nje!”

Siwise iphika sobabili, njengemvama nxa indaba isiphelile. “Hawu, umalumakho wayesethethe omunye umfazi ngemva kwenyanga ezine kuphela?” ngimbuze uChikoko. “Utsho kanye, njalo kwakuyikhona ezathatha omunye ikhefu lami lethemu yesibili lingakapheli,” ahasise u Chikoko. “Umkamalumami wesibili wayengumama oqine kakhulu ekholweni. Wayengena isonto le yakoMai Chaza, laba phela abagqoka izigqoko ezinde ezimhlophe sonke isikhathi. Uyabazi? Yaah.... Umama lo wayeze labazukulu bakhe ababili abangamankazana – okungamantombazana nje okwasekuphuhla. Kwakuthanda nje ukugegedeka, kugijima kugcwala iguma lonke. Kwathi kunjalo nje kwazoba lenkalakatha yempi phakathi kukamalume lomkahe. Ungatsho yayiqalwe yini leyompi? Umalumekazi wesibili wabamba omkhulu walamankazana esebenza engadini kamalume yebilebile, umalume yena emile eceleni engenzi lutho ngitsho ngalomhlola. Umalumekazi wahle wafuna ukwazi ukuthi kuyini okunye luntombazana ayevunyelwa ukukwenza nanku phela njengonkosikazi walapha ekhaya, yena wayengavunyelwa khona ukusondela duze lebilebile likamalume. Wabuza futhi ukuthi laba bobabili babeqale nini ukuba ngamathe lolimi? Ukulwa kwakhona kwaphosa kwacina ngesidumbu phansi, umalumekazi esezame ukuzibophela. Umalume waphanga wamethula umkakhe esezihitshela, eselenga esihlahleni. Esanda kuyethula inkosikazi yakhe, nango eyibhula okuzwayo. Inkosikazi layo yathi okungaqalwayo. Sabona phansi-phezulu, isigqoko sikamalumekazi esimhlophe siyabuzela, sikhwela

sisehla begiqana. Bathi bengena egumeni omunye evuvuke okwesabekayo. Omunye ethule zwi. Umalumekazi wahle wabopha ezakhe wahamba loyedwa wabazukulu bakhe. Omunye wasala esenguye inkosikazi kamalume. Kuze kube lanamhlanje balokhu bebonke.”

“Umalumakho yinyamazana sibili,” ngitsho ngiphendula isitshebo.

“Yaah.... Futhi inyamazana zamadoda ezinjengaye zilenhlanhla ngoba azivamanga ukuhlanguka lamaqhalaqhala abafazi.”

“Ngumfazi bani oliqhalaqhala ?” Yimi lowo ngibuza ngoba kucitshile kimi. Ahleke uChikoko, ahlikihle izandla ngamandla, okombalisi wekolitshini okholisa ukuchasisela abafundi bakhe.

“Iqhalaqhala lomfazi ngulo okhulela umkakhe ngengqondo. Ambuse. Kahluphi, kalalo ulaka ngitsho; ubusa ngoba engumangqeqe....”

Ngihle ngikhumbule ubabakazi wami, uManyemba owake wathonisiswa enduneni ngemva kokuba umkakhe embambe elele lobhilida wesigabeni sabo. Indaba yakhona ihamba kanje: Umkakhe wababona belele emkhandlweni womumbu owawulinywe emasimini. Wathi ebabona esebuqamama, wakhwaza wabasela eqonda kubo. Ubabakazi loganga lwakhe behlukana, babethela ngamajubane, omunye esiyale lomunye esiyale. Iphutha elenziwa ngumalumami yikuthi asekele ubhilida kulokuthi asekele ubabakazi. Lokho kwaba liphutha ngezizatho ezimbili. Okokuqala, ubhilida wabaleka wamtshiya. Uthe esexotshane laye okwesibanga eside, wathi kungcono ayebhodlisela kowangakwakhe ekhaya. Walibona iphutha lakhe lesibili esithi gulukudu ekhitshini, lapho athola umkakhe ecala celeni ehlezi labanye omama. Babezixoxela indaba zabo, befile ngohleko. Owangakwakhe wayephakulula isitshwala lembhida.

“Litshonile Madyira,” wamemeza umama ngokuthaba, wasemoyizela – konke lokhu ekuqondise kumkakhe.

“Litshonile, litshonile ukuthini kwakhona wena uvela feba loMjubheki emasimini?” Babamba eyangaphansi omama. Kwezwakala benyenyeza. Ubuqhalaqhala buka babakazi bathi ngikhona. Wazinkemisa okobona umuntu oqala ukuhlanya, kuyikuhlanya okuhlola okukhulu esigabeni.

“Ngifunga ngogogo olele esidulini!” yatsho iklabalala inkosikazi, ibambe ikhanda ngazo zombili engathi ingalekela lizaqhekezeka. “Ake lizengibonisa umhlolo bantu yeyeni! Ini...? Madyira! Ini...? Mina? Ngilele...? Lobani? Ngaphi? Nini? Njani...?”

Indaba yacina isikoSobhuku. Ubabakazi wayelabafakazi abayisitshiyagalombili; bonke bafakaza bathi bona babehlezi laye ekhitshini ngesikhathi uMadyira ebona into zakhe lezo ayethi wazibona emasimini. Bafunga njalo ukuthi bona babezivelela emhlanganweni weklabhu yabomama owangolweSine, basebeqambuka bengena emzini kababakazi.

Batsho njalo ukuthi babehlezi laye ubabakazi ekuphekeni kwakhe isitshwala lembhida. Bengezelela bathi uManyemba wayengakhanyi njengomuntu owayeke walugxoba emasimini okwalelo langa, ngitsho. Nanku phela wayengeladaka kumbe uthuli, imbala yakhe icazimula ivaselina ayeyigcobile. Wehluleka ukuzibamba uMadyira wathi vele bengathini behleli bevikelana endabeni zobufebe. Lokhu kwacaphula amanye amadoda enkundleni, ezwakala ekhonona, engunguna. Okwezwakala kakhulu yikuthi uMadyira usephule indlela okuthethwa ngayo ebandla ngokukhuluma ithuba lakhe lingakafiki. Lekelela ikhehla elingu Ndori lathi, “Nxa abantwana bexokozela becela ukukhotha ukhezo lokupheka kunina, umntwana ozithobileyo nguye ocina ephiwe lolokhezo.” Likhuluma nje ikhehla likhangele inkalakatha yenyawo zalo, beselithi jeqe uMjubheki libuye libuke inyawo njalo. “Ake sizwe uMjubheki ukuthi yena uthini.” UMjubheki wala ukukhuluma ethi uyafuthelana ngokuthukuthela. Eqeda lapho inkalakatha zendlebe zakhe ezaziphaphile engathi zibalekela ikhanda, zatshikiza. Kulapho ke uKadyevhu, isiphoxo sesigabeni, esakhetha khona ukungenela indaba. Watsho ewuqondise kuMadyira umbuzo, “Uthe wena uthole ubhilida ephezu komkakho?”

“Ye.”

“Wasusithi uxotshana lobhilida wakutshiya?”

“Ye.”

“Kimi lokhu kutsho into eyodwa. Ubhilida ubengakayichithi inhlanyelo ngesikhathi umphazamisa. Ngoba indoda esichithile ayingeke igijime itshiye obeselusa.” Wonke umuntu wafa ngensini. Ngitsho loMjubheki owayethe uzonde uyafa wenelisa ukuhleka kanye, uhleko lwakhe lwezwakala engathi ngolwempisi.

Kwasekuyisikhathi sikaSobhuku ukuthi atsho isinqumo sakhe. Wonke umuntu wayesethiye indlebe. “Indaba le isegcekeni njengomtshayeli wethirakitha,” waqala kanjalo ngezwi elivezeelayo ngoba esemdala kakhulu. “UmkaMadyira ubengekhaya ephekela omakhelwane ngesikhathi uMadyira exotshana lenyamazana abethi ngumuntu, egangeni. Abadala bathi okulempondo akufihlwa emgodleni. Kodwa uMadyira uthi yena iqiniso lifihlekile okokuthi akulamuntu ongalibona, ngaphandle kwakhe. Okwenza kubenzima ukumkholwa uMadyira yikuthi wavele wenza inkalakatha yephutha. Okokuqala, waxotshanisa inyamazana engayisiyo, eyabaleka yamtshiya, njengoba lizizwele lonke. Kodwa ake ngitsho kancane lapha ukuthi loba uMadyira wayezayibamba inyamazana yakhe, icala leli alethesa uManyemba ubezakwehluleka ukuthi aliveze libe sobala. Phela inyamazana ebixotshwa nguMadyira ingaphendula ithi yona ibiphezu *kwenye* inyamazana, hatshi umama lo owetheswe icala lapha. Ngalokho-ke icala

lenyamazana bekuzaba yikuthi isebenzise insimu ka Madyira njengendlu yokulala, ingatholanga mvumo kumnininsimu. Phezu kwalokho, uthe efika ngekhaya uMadyira, ngemva kokuxotshana lenyamazana engayisiyo, uthole umkakhe esepheke isitshwala. Isitshwala phela sithatha isikhathi eside ukuthi sivuthwe, ngaphandle nxa siyimboza. Endaweni yokuthi athathe isitshwala abesiphiwa ngumkakhe asidle, uMadyira usikhalele; ngalokho ke ngeke atsho ukuthi isitshwala leso besivuthiwe kumbe besiyimboza. Wonke umuntu osidlileyo leso sitshwala uthi besivuthiwe, okutsho ukuthi umkaMadyira akungeke kube nguye umuntu obonakale ebaleka emasimini. Akukho esingakukholwa kulokhu okutshiwo nguMadyira. Abadala bathi,inja itshaye le lapho oyithole inyela khona. Ngoba ingavele isuke kuleyo ndawo, ayisazwisisi ukuthi uyijeziselani. Ngokubona kwami, uMadyira uyafana lendoda ethi ngenye ikuseni ivuke isethesainja yayo icala eyalenza isesengumdlwane. Inkundla le ayisiyo yamadlwane. Iyawajezisa amadoda aza lapha lensolo ezingela bufakazi.”

Ekucineni, uMadyira wahlawuliswa imbuzi ezintathu. Eyodwa yayizaphiwa uMjubheki lo amgcone ngamanga; enye yayizaphiwa umkakhe owatholakala emsulwa; eyokucina yayizaba ngeyenkundla, ingene esibayeni sikaSobhuku.

UManyemba, iqhalaqhala lomfazi, wayesenqobile. Kulehungahunga lokuthi wayesevele ezithwele ngesikhathi kungena lindaba enkundleni. Ngemva kwenyanga eziyisitshiyagalombili wabeletha umfana owethiwa ibizo kwathiwa nguMadlebe ngoba elendlebe ezibalekela ikhanda.

Sihleke kancane sobabili nxa ngiqeda ukulandisela uChikoko indaba le, besesisidla. Sasiwaphekile amanyala wodwa. Isitshwala esasiphekwe nguChikoko sasiyimboza ngokwayo. Kuthi isitshebo esasiphekwe yithi sobabili singababi nje ibilebile! Lihle limkhwehlelise uChikoko abesengibuza: “Ndoda, kuyini okukholwa ngebilebile uze ulifakele ugodo kangaka?” Ngingakamphenduli, ikhale ifoni yami. NguBulelwa, ufuna ukwazi ukuthi kubangelwa yini ukuthi ngasosonke isikhathi singaxabana ngisithi kaphume aphele empilweni yami. Uzwakala ehlulukelwe kakhulu, yena kunguye isisusa sengxabano yethu. Ngangimthole eqabujana lenye indoda ekhoneni elimnyama le *Night Club*. Ngihleke ngenxa yomcabango osuthe lwazi engqondweni yami. Mhlawumbe laye uliqhalaqhala lomfazi, mina ngiyinyamazana yendoda! Obethu ubudlelwano buyimvela kancane – inyamazana yendoda leqhalaqhala lomfazi.

Itshatshazi elinguChristina

Barbara Mhangami-Ruwende

Ingumkhehlekehle libhasi. Ithi phezu kokuthunquza uthuli lwesibomvu ibuye ikhafule intuthu emnyama tshu ngomphongolo ongaphansi emuva. Ithwele nzima ukuqansa iqaqa iqonda isihlahla sameva esiyisithingithingi. Kulokungabantwana okuyisekela emva kuphakathi kothuli lwesibomvu lentuthu yebhasi, kumemeza kusithi, “*Masvingonetara!*”

Edwaleni laphaya kuhlezi omama ababili abagqoke iziketi ezinde ezibomvu, amabhulawuzi amhlophe lamaqhiye amhlophe. Kuthi bane umbuzo engqondweni yami, ukuthi kanti benelisa njani ukugcina amabhulawuzi abo emhlophe koChivi, lapho amanzi akhona avele engumbala wetiye engazwelanga amahlamvu, kubuye njalo lesepa esetshenziswayo yile esiziphekela yona elombala ongathi ludaka. Mhlawumbe uMlimu nguye ohlambulula amabhulawuzi abo abemhlophe nke, ngoba bengomama abamaziyo, abamhloniphayo njalo abamdumisayo ngemisebenzi yabo engcwele.

“Sakubona, Kuda. Unjani mtanami?”

Ngomunye wabomama abangcwele, unakaFarai. Ungibingelela nje uphambi kwami. Adibane awami lawakhe. Ulimi lubenzima engathi lunamathiselwe, ngizame ukuvuma ngamehlo.

“Kuda, phendula nxa abadala bekhuluma lawe uyekele ubuqholo bakho lobu,” ngunakaFarai ezwakala esezondile. Ngizame ngamandla wonke ukuthi ngimphendule, ukunengeka okusebusweni bakhe kwenze kubenzima ngamandla ukuthi ngikhulume.

“Tshiyana laye lowo nakaFarai,” kutsho umngane wakhe ngezwi eliphezulu. “Angazi sibili ukuthi uzihluphelani ngalonkazana. Uvele unje – uhlala engohlobileyo futhi kahloniphi abadala.”

Azihambe unakaFarai, kodwa angithi jeqe ngelengulube engakafiki ndawo. Ukukhangelwa ngalindlela sengikwejaye. Ngimane ngigijimise amehlo ngiswele ukuthi ngithini, ngenzeni.

Ensukwini ngijayele ukuma ngemva kwesihlahla sameva, ngibukele abantu abalindele ibhasi, beyilindele ngesineke esitholakala ebantwini

bekhaya kuphela. Ibhasi yakhona ayihambi ngesikhathi. Lanxa uyilindele, uyabe ungakholwa ukuthi uzayibona iqansa, ihoqa iqonde isihlahla sameva, okuyiso isititshi. Umalumami uMhike uthi yena ukuhamba kwayo kuya ngenani lezihambi. Nxa lelalani lisuthisa abantu bebhasi, yikho ukuthi ize lapha koChivi. Kulesizatho sokuthanda kwami ukubukela abantu abalindele ibhasi. Ngithanda ukuzibumbela engqondweni yami ukuthi abantu laba bengabe besiyangaphi. Ngibapha inhambo ezehlukeneyo, ngibasa endaweni engangizwe ngazo: Harare, Chinhoyi, Beitbridge, Chirumhanzu lase Mount Selinda. IMount Selinda yiyo engiyiqathekisiyo. Abathi bangangikhangela babobotheke, yibo kuphela engibasa eMount Selinda. Vele iMount Selinda ivele iyiyo isizatho sami sokuba lapha esilindweni namhlanje.

Ensukwini ezimbili ezedluleyo ngizwe umama etshela unyanewabo, umkababa owesibili, ukuthi uAnti Christina, itshatshazi, ubiziwe ekhaya, ebizwa ngabanewabo – ubaba labobabomncane.

“Obaba bambizile. Ngibona ingani khathesi bazamqondisa ngiyakutshela. Usejaye. Kade bamekelela ngezenzo zakhe eziyangisiyo.” Ngumama lowo ebobotheka okwempisi ngapha ebopha iqhiye yakhe.

“Ngivumelana lawe,” kuphendula unakaKuziva. “Usifaka abantu. Ngangiswele ukuthi ngikhangele ngaphi nxa abanye omama sebenyeya ngeziga zakhe ezibhixa imuli yethu yonke ngengcekeza. Ngamanyala kuphela asenzela wona.”

Ukuzwana kukamama lonyanewabo ngiyakwenyanya. Bayazondana. Kodwa yekela kuthiwe omunye uzahlaliswa idale, batshintsha babe ngamathe lolimi. Abakukholisiyo bobabili yikubona omunye umuntu ehawula. Bakwenza lokhu ngelinye ilanga umelusi esimqhatshileyo elahle imbuzi ezintathu. Ngemva kokuxathulwa ngomchilo wesikhumba wabamabavubavu, wavuma ukuthi imbuzi wayezithengise efuna imali yokubhadalela unina esibhedlela. Ngamzwela usizi kakhulu, kodwa umama lonyanewabo bajama emnyango wekhithini njengamasela angamagwala, bekhola ukuzwa umelusi ehlababakho, ecela uxolo. Khathesi basebekholisa ukuthi uAnti Christina uzangena ebhodweni ebilayo. Abathakathi laba!

Ngibona engathi uzakwehla kuwolo umkhehlekehlele osubhonse wakhafula intuthu emnyama waze wafika lapha. Abambe amabhreki ngamandla udrayiva, abantu baphoseke besiya phambili babuye baphoselwe emuva ezihlalweni zabo. Sengake ngayigada kalutshwana libhasi ngisiya eMasvingo. Ngiyakutshela, akulabunandi kuyo. Umango wokusuka

esititshini sakithi usiyabamba ithara ngamagodigodi kuphela njalo uthatha ihola lengxenywe. Amabhampa lamagodi kwenza bonke abantu ebhasini badladlazele okwabantu abagade amadonki amathayo. Uthuli lungena ngezikhala eziphansi, ephahleni, emaceleni ngitsho lasemawindini ngoba avele awavaleki esikhathini esinengi. Kwezinye indawo akulamawindi – zimbobo nje. Uthuli luzithela emakhaleni lasemehlweni, abantu baze besabe lokuhlenganisa amazinyo hlezi bahlafune inhlabathi elumelisa amazinyo. Ukutshisa, uthuli lomnuko wedizili lowamakhwapha angagezwanga, konke kungiphefumulisa nzima, besekusithi ngihlanze.

Ngitshiyane layo yonke lemicabango sengikhumbula ukuthi kumele ngilume uAnti indlebe mayelana ngomhlango wokumthonisisa ngempilo yakhe engaqedakaliyo.

Ithi isithi ntsi...i...i ibhasi, ukhondakitha akhahlele isivalo. Sikhonone ekuvulekeni kwaso, sivuleke lugege ngoba sibambe phezu kuphela. Sigedezele isivalo engathi luphiko lwenkwilimba olwephukileyo. “St Mary’s – Kurazi-Maringe – Mandiva, Masvingonetara!” Kukhonya ukhondakitha edonsadonsa ikepesi esekhanda andubana ehle ebhasini abhale amatikiti abahambi abasephansi. Kulokungabafanyana okuthi nombe nombe sankawu kusiya ephahleni lwebhasi lapho okulenqumbinqumbi zempahla. Kuthi sekuphezulu lapha kwehlise amasuthukhesi leminywe imtshaqana egoqelwe ngamaphepha ekhakhi kumbe iplasitiki eqatha. Kelembuzi lembuzi ekhala okuzwisa usizi. Abasalayo bakhombele impahla zabo, batsho lokuthi zinjani: “Leyo eluhlaza.” “Isuthukhesi ebomvana.” “Isikhwama esilithanga.”

Bonke abehlileyo batshukekile. Nxa ubakhangele ungathi ezangaphakathi zabo zike zakhuhluzwa okuzwayo, osekusele yikuthi bakhuphe lokhu osekuhlobele ngaphakathi. Bonke bakhangeleka benjalo ngaphandle komhambi oyedwa osethe thutshu emnyango webhasi. Athi esese sitepisini sokucina akhangele yonke indawo engathi uyayeyisa. Achile amakhala engathi wenyanya ukujujuka kwento yonke ayibonayo. Akulalutho olukhanga ilihlo lapha. Kulokungabantwana okucakileyo, uthuli, lokuyiziqinti kotshani obomileyo. Ngilokhu ngilunguzile ngingemva kwesihlahla sameva, ngizwe izwi lika khondakitha selitshintshile. Kasenguye lowa obeklabalala. Usengumuntu odlalayo, osomayo lapho ebuza uAnti, “Nini manje?” Amehlo akhe athe mbe emabeleni kaAnti njalo ukhotha indebe njengemigodoyi yakulesi sigaba etshona ilambile, izulazula indawo yonke.

“Ngipha insuku ezimbili,” aphenndule uAnti ebobotheka, kuvela lezifoco ezihlathini.

Izihambi ezingakagadi zihuduhudule inyawo ngokunengeka. Ukhondakitha akutshaye indiva lokho akhwaze esithi, “Imali! Imali! Imali! Asibhadaleni!”

Ngimkhangele uAnti Christina. Mude, uzacile, umnyama okukamabhulosi. Ikhanda lakhe eligeliweyo lihlezi phezu kwentamo ende, enhle okwamagama. Ulamehlo amnyama khaca, akhacula umlilo nxa esezondile, kanti acwebezela okwamanzi esifula egeleza ilanga libalele, nxa ethabile. Muhle imhlolo. Wedlula bonke abesifazane kithi, loba ngingakaze ngibabone bonke. Lapho esengafika khona ngilaye, njenge Berejena Mission, wonke umuntu wayetshibilika ambuke. Amadoda ayamthanda kakhulu njalo bathanda ukuzisondeza kuye. Kwesinye isikhathi bazisondeza kakhulu. Enye indoda yaze yakhubeka egcekeni phambi kwebhawa ilokhe ikhangele uAnti. Abantu ababebukele konke lokhu bafa ngensini, “Ha ha ha! Ake limbone lo ozigwenxa yedwa ngoba ebone umfazi omuhle.”

Abafazi bona bayamzonda. Basala bencifa nxa esedlula. Ngitsho loyedwa ombingelela ngendlela amadoda ambingelela ngayo.

Ngelinye ilanga enye indoda yabhulwa ngumkayo bevela esigayweni. Indoda le yama yathi khwimilili yaqhuzula amehlo ibuka uAnti esedlula. Kwathi kusenjalo idonki yayo layo nanso iwisa isaka eyayiligaxwe emhlane. Nanso imatha isiyatshona le. Nanso laso isidudla somfazi sisukela umkaso simdinda ngezibhakela, ngapha sithetha, “S’phukuphuku sendoda! Siyelele somuntu! Uzayixotshanisa uze uyibambe idonki leya namhlanje. Ingakutshiya ngizakubulala ngezami lezi. Awulanhloni ukuhawukela iwule?”

Ayikunakanga konke lokho indoda. Yathi noma ibethwa gumfazi yezwakala ibingelela uAnti ngezwi eliphansi, “Sisi Kiri. Unjani? Uyaphila?” U-Anti waqhaqheka ngohleko waze wakhangele phezulu. Ngakhunsuka ngohleko lami, okwatshiya umfazi wokutshaya indoda esephuphuma ngokuthukuthela.

“Ehe...e, wena wule wena! Umsebenzi yikuhamba utshontsha amadoda abanikazi. Awula lanhloni ngitsho, sifebe! Kwazi uMlimu yedwa ukuthi kungani uphenduka lapha esigabeni ungahambi kokuphela, ngomzimba wakho lo olesinyama.”

UAnti wamhubela umfazi, wafika wajama phambi kwakhe. Sasikhefuzela isidudla, silokhe sihlezi indoda yaso amadundulu. Ngabona sihlahla amehlo lapho uAnti esesithe nzo engathi weyisa bona ubuvinqovinqo bomzimba waso.

“Nxa usazi ukuthiinja yakho iyaluma,” watsho uAnti ngezwi elizothileyo, lokhuya ukuzotha okuvala ukubila okungaphakathi,

“uboyibophela esihlahleni. Njalo nxa uyipha ukudla okulingeneyo, ayisoze itshone igxoza indenda kangaka. Ingakwenza lokho?”

Ngobude bakhe wayesengathi uqoqomele uAnti, umfazi wokutshaya indoda wakhanya esemfitshane ngamandla. “Uke ulinge nje empidlwani yakho yokugalula emafutheni... ngithi uke ulinge futhi ukungibiza ngele wule, ngizakutshengisa yona kanye leyonto enza mina lawe sibe ngamawule. Mina ngiyabhadalwa. Wena ke? Utholani? Impunga yedonki esigugile, okuzindwangu okugulayo okuthi ngabantwana, lokuyinto lokhu othi yindoda?” Wamkhangela umafebu. Inkalakatha yomfazi isiginqe! Wamuthi nhlo uAnti ngamehlo akhe laya avuthayo okokucina, wathi hlasi isandla sami wathi, “Asambe Kuda.”

Ngiyiphosele eceleni yonke lemicabango, ngikhangele okwenzakala khathesi, phambi kwami. Ngibone nangu uAnti uza eqonde isihlahla sameva. Ulibonile ikhanda lami lilunguza ngemva kwaso. “Kudakwangu!” amemeze ngezwi lakhe elihlezayo. Izwi lakhe ungathi ngelomuntu obekhala kumbe eklabalala okwesikhathi eside. Amadoda kukhanya ekuthanda ukuheleza lokhu. Kusukela kudala wakhetha ukungibiza esithi Kudakwangu, okutsho ukuthi “ukufuna kwami” kumbe “intando yami”, hatshi Kudakwashe okutsho intando yenkosi. Phela ngingomunye wamantombazana abayisithupha ngakithi, njalo ngiyisicino. Ngomnyaka ngizalwa, uAnti wayebhala amazamanitshini e “*O*” level. Abanye odadewethu basebesukile ngekhaya, bayakwenda endaweni zelizwe ezitsheyeneyo. Inkomo zazidlana uboya esibayeni sikababa ngenxa yamalobolo ayekhutshwe ngabakhwenyana. Odadewethu laba abasivakatsheli ngitsho. Langelanga kubhubha uKhulu bathumela izwi lokuthi bazabuya bezophosa ilitsho ngemva komncgwabo, kodwa ngitsho loyedwa osewakewalugxoba.

“Ehe! Lamanje kumele kube njalo,” ngumama lowo eqondise kunyanewabo ngelinye ilanga, esitsho ngezwi lesazi. “Umfazi othethweyo kumele ahlale emzini wakhe lomkakhe. Engekela ukwenza njalo, uyathi ekuphendukeni athole indawo yakhe isithethwe nguchakide.” Uthi abafazi abatshontsha amadoda abanye ngochakide. Ochakide angithi bavele bayaziwa ngokungena esilugwini senkukhu betshontsha amaqanda.

“Ah ah mamomdala. Ngaze uyilinde indoda ilanga lonke kumbe ulale ngalihlo linye ebusuku, ingakhetha ukudla okuphuma embizeni yomunye umfazi, ungezake uyingqande. Akulalutho ongalwenza ukuyivimbela. Odadewabo bakaKuda kumele bazebona abazali babo. Yikho okuqondileyo lokho, hatshi ukuba yizinama kubomkabo.”

Ancife umama. Nanguya eqonda emva kwekhitshi. Azwakale enqolonga ngezwi lobusayo: “Mamomncane, isitshebo sakho siyatsha lapha,

phangisa!” Umfazi omncane kumele akhunjuzwe indawo yakhe phela; angekelwa, angamila impiko.

Kuthiwa umama, ekuzameni ukwenqabela ubaba ukuthatha umfazi wesibili, wazithwala ngami, elethemba lokuthi ngizazalwa ngingumfana. UGogo ozala umama wayemenze wakholwa ukuthi uMlimu, ngokukhalipha kwakhe langesihawu sakhe wayegcine leli thuba lokucina ukuthi umama azale umfana, kuphele lelihlozo lokugcwalisa amankazana ekhaya. Baze baya lasenyangeni – ikhehla elalihlala ezintabeni. Yilo-ke elamgezisa isibeletho lathi kusukela lapho, isibeletho sakhe sasizathwala abafana kuphela.

Yiso lesi sithembiso senyanga esenza ubaba wabethela ngejubane mhla ngizalwa, ukuthi azebona indodana yakhe eyodwa, icinathunjana lasekhaya. Udokotela womlungu owayelapho wayeqonqosele kubaba lomama ukuthi umama kube yikuzithwala kwakhe kokucina ngoba angavele alinge azithwale njalo, uzazala isiyelele somntwana esasizagijima sinqunu isigaba sonke, njalo sithi singabona abantu bezidlulela sibadlithize ngamazinyo. Ekufikeni kwakhe ubaba esibhedlela wahlangana lomsizi wabonesi owamenzela amhlophe ngokuzalwa kwendodakazi yakhe ekhanya iphile kakhulukazi. UAnti uthi ubaba wapontsha njenge thaya elikhuthswe ivalufu, wezwakala esithi, “Kudakwashe – yintando ka Mlimu.”

Ngalithola kanjalo-ke ibizo lami, livela ekudaneni ukuthi umuntu angeke azikhethele. Ngangiyintando kaMimu hatshi ekababa, singasatsho ekamama. Kodwa ku Anti, ngaba yiso kanye isifiso sakhe, intandokazi yakhe. Ngiyilokhu engiyikho khona ngenxa yakhe.

UAnti uthi ngamanga ukuthi yonke into iyintando kaMlimu. Uthi esikhathini esinengi, abantu bayazenzela nje izinto ezimbi bagcone uMdali. Uyakuzonda lokhu kucabanga kwabantu.

“Umuntu agwazwe etshwaleni ebhawa, yintando kaMlimu; omunye afe ekliniki ngoba akuladokotela, kube yintando kaMlimu; uhulumende akhweze intengo yezinto angakhwezele abantu iholo, lokho lakho ngumthetho kaMlimu. Yikho ilizwe leli libole kangaka ukwedlula isidumbu senyamazana esithe dindilili egcekeni sitshiswa lilanga!”

Ngimange uAnti Christina besengizama ukuthwala isikhwama sakhe. “Hatshi Kuku wami! Siyasinda kakhulu isikhwama lesi, awungeke usisuse phansi mtanami! Kodwa unjani mtanami? Ub’ usungikhanuka?”

Ngingekuze ikhanda ngamandla, ngibobotheka kancane, inhloni sezingiphethe, ngingafuni ukuveza amazinyo ami ngoba abantu besithi zingavula.

“Bobotheka phela Kuku ngibone.” Ngigale kancane, ekucineni umlomo uxotshe indlebe, uAnti ahleke.

Angiphulule ikhanda besesiqonda ekhaya. Nginanzelele ukuthi okungabantwana lokhuya obekugcwele uthuli kusekela ibhasi, sekunyamalele.

Kumele ngimtshele uAnti ngendaba emlindeleyo ekhaya. Ngime. Sengiyathe magama phuma, mpu. Alele ekhanda. Ulimi lalo ngifise phela ukuthi lwenze umsebenzi walo, qha. Lutho....

Mina loAnti sehlukene kakhulu. Noma laye engomunye wabantwana abayisithupha emulini yakwabo njalo eyisicino, yena welama abafana bodwa. Ukhulumela phezulu, kesabi lutho futhi ukulwa ngokwakhe – mfazi, ndoda, ebusuku kumbe emini – uhlala ezimisele ukulwa. Lokuzonda kaphuzi. Nguntandokayiphikiswa, ukhanda limtshela okwakhe. Abanewabo akabesabi ngendlela abesatshwa ngayo ngabanye abesifazana ngakithi. Njengoba enguye omdala, ubaba nguye oyinhloko, kodwa uAnti kamthathi mango. Umtshela egcekeni ukuthi uyinkalakatha yenja ekhonkotha ingalumi. Ngitsho loKhulu wami esaphila, uAnti wayengamesabi ngitsho, noma uKhulu wayelolunya elenhliziyi elukhuni.

Ugqoka amajini abamba mpa leziketi eziveza imilenze. Uyapenda umlomo ubebomvu; “engathi udle isibindi siluhlaza,” ngumama lowo enweba indebe ngokwenyanya. Ngumhawu kuphela omenza atsho njalo umama. Akukho okunye. Bonke abafazi, noma bemnyeya uAnti, enhliziyweni zabo bayamhawukela. Ucoma inkophe zibemnyama, athi topo ngpenseli yokuzicomba eceleni komlomo. Kwesinye isikhathi ugqoka iwiki elombala wotshani obomileyo ebusika. Zinde lezonwele zewigi, zitshaya eqolo. Izicathulo aziqgokayo ngo qwa abacijileyo. Athi esebagqokile atshikize, izibunu zigide engani ngabantwana ababili abadlala begubuzele ngengubo.

Ngake ngezwa obab’omncane besithi amawule yiwo apenda ubuso abuye agqoke okuyiziketana okufitshane okuveza imilenze ngoba efuna ukuhuga amadoda. Babehlezi ngaphansi kwesihlahla sesiringa, benatha amasese. Indaba le yayingathi iyabathuma ukuthi khonokho khonokho, babambe ingaphambili zabo, bengathi bayenwaya lapho. Bonke obab’omncane zinsumbelume, yikho bephekela ngumama lomama oncance.

UAnti uthi amakha *eImpulse* awafafaza emzimbeni wonke yiwo amehlukanisa labanye nxa sekusiza endabeni zokunukelela kwabesifazana. “Nxa ngihamba, bahle bakwazi ukuthi itshatshazi elinguChristina liyeza, belilapha kumbe lilapha, eduzeduze nje.” Athi eqeda lapho uAnti akhangele phezulu aqhaqheke ngohleko okwesikhathi eside.

Mina angifani lo Anti Christina. Ngimfitshane njalo ngibomvu kakhulu. Ngiyisigqimugqimu, futhi ngithule. Engingakwaziyo yikuthi ngithule ngoba abantu besitsho njalo ngami kumbe ngithule ngoba angilalutho lokutsho. Ngake ngezwa umama etshela abangane bakhe emthonjeni ukuthi ngaze ngabaleminyaka emine kusehlula ukukhuluma, ngisazi amabala amalutshwane kuphela. Wathi futhi ngithathela khatshana, yikho ngaphinda u gredi 3. Sengileminyaka elitshumi lantathu kodwa ngiku gredi 5. “Ngalobobusuku ngivela beletha esibhedlela,” waqhubeka umama ekhulumela phezu ebambe izinqe, “indoda yahle yathi yona isikhethe ukuthatha umfazi wesibili ozayizalela abafana abanengi ngoba nanku phela mina sengimuphe umlandu wokondlela lokunonisela amanye amadoda abafazi. Ngakhala, ngamncenga. Ngayathe ngizimisele ukuzithwala futhi masinyane, ngitsho ukuthi angizwe. Wakloloda wathi, “Amawuwu angisawafuni. Yiwo kuphela agcwele esinyeni sakho. Ngikhala ngenkomo zami ezaya kini. Inkomo ezahamba zikhala ngoba uzala imikhaza yodwa.”

Waqhubeka umama esethole ithuba angafuni kulidlalisa. “Umama ongizalayo laye wathi isinye sami somile, yikho sasingenelisi ukuthwala umfana. Wagcizelela wathi angazake asolwe muntu umkami ngokuthatha kwakhe umfazi wesibili ngoba ngasengidlalise amathuba ayisithupha.”

Abangane bakamama bakhala laye ezengwenya. Enhliziyweni zabo ngiyazi ukuthi babemhleka. “Phepha mngane wami, phepha mhlobo wami. Amadoda aleziga. Umntwana oyinkazana kasimuntu kanti yena? Akusiwo lawo mankazana agcine abazali babo, bebathumela imali evela edolobheni ukuthi ibasize? Imgodla elamehlo angithi ngabanewabo bomkakho, ohwayibhetshu laba,” kwabhavuma omunye umngane kamama.

“Kungasenani,” atshaye izandla umama okomuntu okwaziyo ukuthi ubukelwe, “kwaba yintando kaMlimu ukuthi umkami athathe umfazi wesibili, ngoba ngasuka ngagula unyanewethu kwaba nguye okhangela uKuda lo.” Wakhombela lapho engimi khona. uMama akawahlanganisi awakhe lawami, lanxa ekhuluma lami. “Unyanewethu wamondla ngelambazi elilochago lwenkomo uKuda ngoba amabele ami ahle oma qha. Ngitsho lona ithonsi lochago.”

“Hee! Bakithi! Kungathi kuyakuqonda mhlobo wami!” Bonke batshaya izandla bakekeja njengezikhukhukazi zibhodabhoda iguma lonke kungela lutho ezilwenzayo. “Ngaseqinisweni, umfazi lowaya, unyanewethu, yisibusiso esivela kuMlimu, yikho sihlalisane kuhle kangaka.”

Lokhe ngingakholwa ukuthi umama wayengaqamba amanga kalula kanjeya. Uyamkholwa okugcweleyo nxa esecolisisa wona amanga, kodwa mina ngiyazi ukuthi yingwe lenja lonyanewabo. Uzonda khona ukuthi ubaba kasela sikhathi laye ngitsho. Ukudla kwakhe kasakudli kanti lokumkhangela

usemkhangelela phansi sakudla kwakhe. Akasayi lasendlini kamama ebusuku. Lemisindo leyana esakuhininiza kwenja, lokugomela, lokuwisa iphika engangijayele ukukuzwa kuphuma endlini kamama nxa elobaba, ayisekho. Babethi ngilele ngesikhathi besenza lezi zinto. Khathesi ubaba ubona unyanewabo kamama kuphela, othi ezikhathini ezinengi ekuseni azitshile egumeni, ehlabela kamnandi, imbala lezinqe kutshikiza kamnandi okwetsheyini yebhayisikili efakwe ioyili yazwela. “Ake limbone! Uhamba engathi ulomgodi wegolide phakathi kwemlenze,” kungunguna umama ekuseni okunjalo.

Yimi isisusa sobunzima abuthweleyo umama. Yimi isizatho sokuthi unyanewabo abelomhobholo wokuqabuja ubaba phambi kwethu sonke enganake lutho, athi eqeda lapho aqhunsuke ngohleko, atshaye izandla lobaba, kuhlekwa umnyama kamama. Yimi njalo isizatho sokuthi umama aqambe amanga emfuleni ethi uhleli kuhle lonyanewabo lobaba.

“Heee, kodwa kulento engihlekisayo: unyanwethu usezele amankazana amabili elandelana.” Wabakhangele ezinhlamvini zamehlo laba ayekhuluma labo umama, efuna ukubona ukuthi bayithatha njani indaba le.

“Liqiniso lelo, liqiniso,” bavuma kanyekanye.

“Walile ukuzithwala futhi unyanwethu. Wamtshela usabantwana ukuthi ukuzalelwa amankazana wodwa ngabafazi ababili kutsho ukuthi uhlupho lukuye. Akazange amkhekheleze. Wamtshela nta ukuthi simupha konokho kanye akufaka kithi. Uthe ucinile ukuthwala isisu sendoda eyisiwula, ezala amankazana kuphela ibe isigcona abafazi abathwala labo bantwana. Kumele sibaginye yini laba bantwana?”

“Ulomcijo unyanewenu,” kwatsho omunye umngane kamama etshekise ikhanda wabamba isilevu.

“He he he,” wahleka engahleki umama. “Wamtshela futhi ukuthi, angathatha omunye umfazi, yena kalandaba. Ufuna ukubethwa ngumoya akhulise amadodakazi akhe.”

“Ngilethemba watshaywa waze watshiywa esititshini sokufa,” kwatsho unakaTambu, inkalakatha yomfazi, ekhwezela umama.

“Etshaywa ngubani? Ngabe ubuza ukuthi katshaywanga yini usekabantwana. Lubhedane lomfazi phela unyanwethu. Umkami kathi nklwe kuye. Isilima sendoda lesiya. Angeke amtshaye ngoba angithi uthonta uluju unyanwethu, umkami angalusuthiyo! Angaluswela lolo luju angagula, afe ayelahlwa sibili.”

“He he he!” baqhunsuke kanye kanye okwempisi sezibone inyamazana ebulewe yatshiywa. Ngathula zwi ngabukela betshayana izandla. Ngazibuza ukuthi kuyini okuhlekisayo ngoluju lolo, lokuthi unyanewabo kamama uzigcina ngaphi inyosi zoluju lwakhe.

“Anti,” ngiqale. Ulimi lwami selutshombuluka emlonyeni, “bakulindele.”

“Ho-o-o, utsho labo? Ngiyazi mtanami. Ungakhathazeki. Iziyelele zabantu leziya! Ngibaqoqele, bazangibona. Asiqale sifike ngekhaya, ubukele kuphela uAnti wakho esesenza okwakhe. Engizabenza khona ungabhala ngakho indatshana ebhukwini lakho. Ulokhe ubhala?”

“Ye Anti, lokhe ngibhala,” yimi lowo.

Ngihotshe amakha asuka emzimbeni kaAnti, eza njengamagagasi. Ngizwe okungaba yinjabulo kuphinde kube yikuhlaliseka. Kuxhwatha kancane esiswini kuqanse kusiya ekhanda, engathi ngamagwebu eFanta ephuphuma ichitheka embodloleni ekhutshuzwe kakhulu. Ngimlalele ekhuluma ngamadlabuzane ngempilo yakhe eMount Selinda. Kuthi ngimbuze ukuthi kanti wasuka nini eMutare, kodwa amagama alele ekhanda, kwehlule ukuthi aze emlonyeni, lolimi lusinde engathi yisitshubo somntwana esimanzi.

UAnti Christina ligabazi ekukhulumeni. Nxa echasisa ulutho, ucina usulubona phambi kwamehlo akho. Usebenzisa amabala alula nxa elandisa indaba, ngendlela umeluki webhasikiti agabaza ngayo ngelala. Wangipha ibhuku lokubhalela. Uthi angaqeda ukungixoxela indaba zakhe ngihle ngizibhale phansi. Kandisanga ukuvakatsha kodwa nxa efika ekhaya uyazibala indaba zami zikhathi zonke. Zingaye zonke. Ubuya equkethe imihlobo lemi hlobo yendaba nxa esiza ekhaya, okungenza ngihlale ngilindele ngabomvu ukufika kwakhe.

“IMount Selinda yindawo enhle okwamagama, Kuku. Lidolobho elincane elithuleyo eliphezu koqaqa. Kubetha umoya omnandi futhi izihlahla lotshani kuluhlaza tshoko, hatshi inkangala le yakoChivi.” Kube sengathi uyalikhafula, uyalenyanya lelibizo lokuthi Chivi ngoba ulitsho umlomo wangaphezulu ewuchayile, abesekhafulela phansi egcizelela ukweyisa kwakhe lindawo.

“Ngisebenza esitolo sotshwala khonangale. Indlu yami ingemva kwaso. Umnikazi ulobuntu njalo ulomusa. Kuku, ubuntu obunjalo yimvela kancane. Uyabamkela nxa ubuphiwa, kungakhathalekile ukuthi buvela kubani lokuthi kuyini okungonakala ekuzwananeni kwenu.”

Khonokho nje bubune ubuso bakhe, yephuke inhliziyi yami. UAnti akumelanga ahlulukelwe empilweni yakhe yobutshatshazi njalo kuyangethusa ukumbona ekulesisimo. Ngisethukile nginjalo, ngisadinga lamazwi okumduduzwa, angikhangele ngobuso bentokozo, akhulume ngelizwi eligcwele impilo, “Ekuseni, umoya uyaqandelela futhi unukelela utshani obutsha lezi hlahla *zephayini*. Kuyaqandelela sibili, yikho abantu bakhona benganuki amaginqo izikhathi zonke. Nxa ukhangele ukoma kwalapha

ungacabanga ukuthi imzimba yabantu izagcina amanzi amanengi. Endaweni yalokho imzimba yabo ivuza amabhakede lamabhakede amaginqo.”

Akhokhe umoya kancane, abeseqhubeka. “Ngilabangane abanengi khonale Kuku. Ngitsho lomnikazi wesitolo sotshwala ngumngane wami. Ibizo lakhe ngubaba uMpofu kodwa uthi ngimbize ngelokuzalwa, elithi Libson. Kangibhadalisi lutho ukuhlala lapho, futhi ungibhadala afake imbasela nxa umkakhe engekho esekhaya. Kuzoba lomngane wami uTongai odrayiva igonyethi. Usuka eZimbabwe esiya eMozambique kumbe eZambia, abesedlulela eCongo. Ithiraki yakhe intofontofo okokuthi kwesinye isikhathi ngisuka laye eMount Selinda sisiya eBeitbridge, abeseqhubeka yedwa esiya eSouth Africa. Ngimlinda eBeitbridge okwamalanga athize ngikwejisa labangane bami, abesengidobha ekuphendukeni.”

“Omunye umngane wami omkhulu ngumlimi olihiwa, u Mr Todd. Umkhangele nje ngezake ukholwe ukuthi uyasitshaya isiShona njenge siShona, Kuku. Akholise nxa ngimbiza ngisithi Mandevu ngoba indevu zakhe zinde, ziminyene njalo sezimhlophe. Ungipha imali enengi futhi wake wangipha obunye ubucwebe bomkakhe obegolide ayethi umkakhe kasoze abone ukuthi buthethwe. Uthi umkakhe ulukhuni, ulolunya futhi kazwisisi ukuthi yena Mandevu ulenhliziyo yomAfrika noma engumlungu. Umka Mandevu umzondela ukuthi kafuni kuthutha eZimbabwe alandele okwenziwa ngabanye abelungu. Umama lo ufuna ukuya phetsheya kwezintwandle kodwa uMandevu uthi lapha eZimbabwe yikho kibo, yilo kuphela ikhaya alaziyo.”

Umuzi wangakithi usukhanya manje. UAnti azelule manje, avuse ikhanda. Usetshitsha okwesotsha; mina sengithotha eceleni kwakhe ukuze ngingasaleli muva.

“Ah! UAnti Kiri usefikile!” kuklabalala umama ezenza umuntu osemanzi te ngokuthaba. Asigijimele, elinye ipatapata lakhe lize lihutshuke enyaweni. Ame aligqoke, ngapha ilembu lakhe lokuthandela, izambia, liyathanduluka. Yintshantshu umama ekuqambeni amanga. Amdumele uAnti okomngane othabele umngane amcina kudala, abe semethula isikhwama asilengisileyo, sonke lesi sikhathi ememeza, “uAnti Kiri usefikile!”

Ubaba usukuma ngaphansi komthunzi wesiringa, aze kancane ehlangabeza uAnti. Ngivele ngikuzwe ukufuthelana kuka Anti. Usethobile okwenkomo esifuna ukuthuza uAnti kanti njalo uhlafuna itshingamu. Amkhangele enhlamvini zamehlo umnewabo. Sikhuze umhlolo ubaba exhawula udadewabo abuye ambambathe emahlombe. Kuseyikuxhawula yini? Ufake inkalakatha yamandla sengathi uzama ukukhwindlula ingalo kaAnti.

Kube lokuthula ilanga lize liphole. Kodwa yikuthula okufana lokwezulu lithwala ngoba wonke umuntu ngekhaya ungathi kahlalisekanga kuhle. Ngitsho lembuzi lenkukhu kungathi kutshotshobe. UAnti wenza engathi kawaboni amehlo aphoswa kuye, emtshontsha. Namhlanje obab'omncane bagezile futhi bagqoke amayembe abawathembileyo. Omama besigabeni bayadidizela bayapheka emabhodweni. Amaziko abo athe gqa gqa iguma lonke. Abanye ngabaquma inkukhu eduze lesilugu sazo. Ngiyezwa nje ukuthi kukhona okukhonayo. Ngibhodabhode egumeni ngithungatha umkhomdo walento ezayo.

Selibantubahle. Uqhatshi lokudla lubambile emoyeni ngoba awuvunguzi lomoya wakhona. Besengibona udwendwe lwabantu lusiza ngakithi. Bayatheleka laba bantu. Nxa ubakhangele besiza ungathi yinyoka ihamba kancane. Ngime esangweni ngiyibukele lenyoka emabalabala isondela kancane kancane. Ilanga manje selimathunzi, lithi selitshona likhuphe eminye imibala. Kukhona olithaga okweqanda, olithusi, kube khona oxubanisa okubomvu lokulithanga. Amayezi abesethatha imibala le kube sengathi lutshinda olulula olulemibalabala emangalisayo.

“Sakubona Kuda,” ngethuswe ngabantu bengibingelela lapho engimi khona, esangweni. Ingqondo yami bayisuse ezimangeni zokutshona kwelanga. Kodwa ulimi lwale lunamathele ephahleni lomlomo. Abanye bathwele imitshaqana, abanye badengezela amaqhaga otshwala lamahewu emakhanda. Bangaba litshumi lanhlanu ubunengi.

“Isiqholo somntwana lesi. Ngiyakutshela, ngabe ngowami, ngasengamtshaya kwaze kwaba lolutho phakathi kwekhanda lakhe leli elibeth' umoya.”

Amehlo ngiwathi mbo enyaweni zami ezingcolileyo ukuze angadibani lawabantu nxa bengena esangweni. Awabo phela alenzondo, alensolo. Kuthi qhwi engqondweni ukuthi ngidinge uAnti ngimtshele ngomumo wezinto. Ngileqiniso lokuthi uAnti Kiri uzangichasisela ukuthi kwenzakalani. Ngihlangane lomama ethwele ukhomané olulentaba yesitswala.

“Kuda, hamba uyencedisa omama ukuthwala ukudla kusiya kuzethekeli ngaphansi kwezihlahla. Bakulindele, phangisa.”

Ngiye exukwaneni labomama abaphithizelayo, amehlo ami agijime edinga uAnti. Kakho kubomama laba abathandele ngamalembu alomfanekiso wobuso bukaMongameli welizwe osebunyakaza ngenxa yokuqephuza kwezibunu zabo ezinkulu lapho bedidizela ngamandla. Abanginaki ngitsho. Ngibone kungcono ukucatsha ngemva kwe siringa lapho engibona khona into yonke. Ngiyabazi bonke laba bantu. Kulamaqhaga amahewu lawe *Chibuku* lapho okuhlezi khona obaba. Bahlezi ezitulweni abanye ezigodweni. Omama bonke bahlezi emacansini

lasezigogweni zembuzi, bakhulumela phansi. Nginanzelele ukuthi inengi labantu laba ngelako Nyaka.

“NakaKuziva, usungeza laye uKristina,” ngubaba lowo. Sekuthule cwaka. Aze eqhutshwa ngunyanewabo kamama uAnti Christina, emusa lapho okubuthene khona abantu. Ukhanya emangele uAnti ukubona abantu bonke laba. Nxa ubakhangele behamba bonke, unakaKuziva usengathi ngokuyimpolompolo eceleni kuka Anti osavevane. Phela uAnti uhamba engathi kanyatheli lakunyathela phansi. Amkhangele unakaKuziva uAnti ngamehlo agcwele imibuzo. Yena unakaKuziva abobothেকে engathi uthi “ungethuki lutho,” qede akhangele eceleni. Uhamba kancane unakaKuziva, ugobise ikhanda okomuntu ozithobileyo. Ngibone kamhlophe ukuthi ufisa uAnti enze njengaye. Kakwenzi lokho uAnti. Uyahweda. Atshintshanise izinqe engathi uzigiqe ngabomo. Waziphiwa phela. Ngibakhangele baze bahlale esigogweni esibekwe eceleni kukababa.

Aqale ubaba: “Christina, dadewethu. Sikubizile ukuthi uze ekhaya emavikini amabili adlulileyo. Siyathaba ukuthi wenelisile ukuza.”

Asuse isikhwehlela esingekhoyo. “Eh... uyabona, siyafika isikhathi empilweni yomuntu wesifazane, ukuthi ende, abelomuzi, abelemuli, isikhathi singakamtshiyi. Abesifazane abafani lamadoda ngoba amadoda awatshiywa yisikhathi, ngaphandle kokuthi afe. Umfazi unjengeluba, lona elibalihle okwesikhatshana beselibuna. Ubuhle bomfazi lenzalo yakhe, kunjalo lakho. Kokubili kuyedlula masinyane.”

Bavumelane abantu, abanye baze banqekuze amakhanda. UAnti abakhangele aze abakhangelisise laba bantu engathi ukhona amaziyo amdingayo. Aqhubeke ubaba ngezwi lebhungayezi: “Impilo yakho le yokuzulazula lamadolobho ayimfanelanga ngitsho umfazi ophuma kuleliguma elihlonitshwa kangaka.”

Usethukuthele manje uAnti. Amehlo asenciphe aba zinsungulo okukamangoye osefuna ukweqela igundwane. Umlomo wakhe uyavevezela emaceleni futhi usephefumulela phezulu okomuntu okhanywe kancane.

“Ngalokho-ke Kiri, dadewethu onguye yedwa, thina, amadoda alapha ekhaya, sikutholele umyeni. Sikwenza konke lokhu nje sisekelwa langamadlozi athi wona ubaba kalalanga ngokuthula ethuneni lakhe. Uzaze athole ukuthula nxa ungenda ube linina elihloniphekayo emzini womkakho.”

Anambithe amagama akhe ubaba, aqhubeke: “Sikutholele indoda ekufaneleyo, dadewethu. Yindoda evuthiweyo, ehlonitshwayo esigabeni njalo izakugcina kuhle kanye labantwana ozabazala. Uvumile ukukuthatha, noma ulezici, njalo ungaseyiyo ntombi egcweleyo. Kalandaba lokuthi usuwabhodile amadoda. Kodwa ufuna ukuthi nxa esekuthethe, abe nguye yedwa.”

Ngecele yelihlo ngimbone uNyaka lenye indoda behamba kancane besiza egcekeni esihlezi kulo. Bathi ukuma eceleni kwendlu ebucwadlana belinde ukubizelwa emphakathini.

“UNyaka ngumlimi ophumeleleyo. Ngiyethemba ukuthi wena, Kiri, uzakuba yinkosikazi ezwayo, uhlalisane kuhle labonyanewenu ababili.”

Asondele aze ayekuma eduze kukababa uNyaka. Ngizwe ngimzwela kakhulu. Ugqoke okulibhulugwe okumnyama okujujukileyo. Kubotshwe ngebhanti lesikusha. Enyaweni ugqoke amanyathela okuzibazela, abantu besebenzisa amathaya emota amadala. Inyawo zidabukile ngiyakutshela, ungathi yindlu kafudu. Kuthi iyembe yakhe eyimpunga ilesigamba esibomvu komunye umkhono. Lapho ezama ukubobotheka anyenama, kuvele ingavula eziludaka ngenxa yegwayi alibhemayo. Lamazinyo akhona ayabalwa. Amehlo akhe abomvu alobhici. Atshayisane lakaAnti. Athi ukudibana laka Anti anyenama ngamandla umdala.

Angisaphefumuli lakuphefumula ngoba angifuni kukhutha ngitsho lokukodwa okwenzakalayo. Asukume uAnti ame mpo. Ugqoke isikipa esimnyama, isiketi esibanga enqagaleni, lamapatapata enyaweni. Bababaze abantu ngoba yikudelela ukuthi umfazi ame emphakathini engatshelwanga ngamadoda. UAnti kazihluphi ngalokho; uvele uhlezi esithi kalandaba lokuyimithetho okunje, okungelamsebenzi.

“Banewethu, ngiyabonga kakhulu ukuthi liyangithanda. Lize langitholela indoda.” Athukuze isandla emabeleni, siphume sifumbethe umxhaka wemali yamaphepha. “Kodwa ngilusizi ukuthi uNyaka uphuzile ukungithatha. Ngalokho-ke mina ngiyazilobola. Njengoba ngizimpahla ezonakeleyo, ngiyimpahla esebenzileyo, ngibona sengathi lemali ingenela ekungiloboleni.”

Eqeda kutsho njalo uAnti ayithi phoseliyani enye yemali kubaba. Besamangele abantu, nango esiya exhibeni lethu, ngitsho lokuthi anyemukule emuva. Kube lokuxokozela, ubone nje ukuthi bazondile abakoNyaka. Abanengi babo sebexabana lobaba, bemthembisa ukumenza kubi, bethi kabuyisele imali yabo ayeyithethe ethi ngeyamalobolo. Kusenjalo ngijime ngiye exhibeni ngithole uAnti ehlubula isiketi sakhe esibomvu esegqoka ijini. Aphosele amapatapata akhe esikhwameni aze laso. Athi ukungibona amehlo akhe ahlengezele inyembezi.

“Kuku, sekumele ngihambe masinyane indwangu lezi ezingoyihlo zingangitholi lapha. Bangangidinda imhlolo ngingekela ukubaleka khathesi. Ngiyakuthembisa ukuthi ngelinye ilanga inyakanyaka le isiphelile, sesikhohlwe ngayo, ngizabuya ngizokuthatha usuke kulendawo. Uqine, angithi? Ukhumbule futhi ukuthi awusimpahla yomuntu angayithengisa santando. Bengazama, ubaleke, uyangizwa? Sekumele ngihambe manje.”

Angange uAnti ngapha seziwohloka inyembezi. Mina sengimdambiyana, izandla ziphongulenga nje. Ngokuphazima kwelihlo abesephume wahamba. Nansi isikipa sakhe esimnyama, usikhohlwe phansi lapha. Ngisidobhe ngisise emakhaleni, ngihotshe umnuko we *Impulse*. Zehle ezitshisayo. Ngithalaze kokulixhiba kwethu okuminyeneyo. Okusalayo kimi ngumnuko we *Impulse*.

Ngilokhe ngilizwa ilizwi lakhe lohleko lwakhe engqondweni yami: “Nxa ngihamba, bahle bakwazi ukuthi itshatshazi elinguChristina liyeza, belilapha, lilapha, khonapha eduze nje.”

Ngingum'Afrika, akunjalo?

Mzana Mthimkhulu

“Ekuthabiseni amakhiwa akho, uyintshantshu. Ngiyabona bayajabula ukuthi basebenza lomuntu onjengawe!” Kuhayiza uMark endlebeni zami siphuma ehofisini ka Maneja omkhulu, singena emkhandleni obanzi owehlukanisa amahofisi.

“Ukutsho ngani lokho?” Yimi lowo ngimphendula ngitshekise ikhanda njalo sengihwaqile ngoba indlela akhuluma ngayo ingenenga. Atshitshe, sihambe silinganisene, izicathulo zethu zitswililiza emathayileni erabha afakwe phansi.

“Ungazitshayi ongakwaziyo,” nguMark lowo ehleka engahleki.

“Uqonde ukuthini?” ngibuze sengikhulumela phezulu ngokucaphuka.

“Ngitsho ukuzenz’ ikhiwa kwakho. Kunini sikubekezelela? Besingela ndaba lokudla kwakho isitshwala ngefokhu lenayifi enkantini, kodwa namuhla udlulise amalawulo.”

Ngahleka kancane. “Ukwenza izinto lula, njalo ngcono, ayisiso sikhiwa. Ngizizwa ngikhululekile nxa ngisidla ngefokhu lenayifi, hatshi ngezandla. Kanti vele ngidale cala bani khathesi?”

“Angithi emhlanganweni ub’ uzibonakalisa, uzenza umaneja ongcono kulawo wonke amamaneja amnyama.”

Ngathi khwimilili, ngamuthi dluku ngengalo. Abanye omaneja basidlula simi bona behla ngamastepisi.

“Ukhuluma ngani kanti wena?”

Anikine ikhanda eselimhlotshana uMark, abesesithi, “Ngifisa ukuthi ngabe uzizwile sisemhlanganweni usutshela amakhiwa ngephethro yakho yalenyanga ongakayiqedi. Bekusenyanyeka futhi usonela thina abanye. Yikho obukufuna, ukubukwa nguMr Wilson.” Waselingisela ibhonga lika Mr Wilson lokugedzelisa kwakhe ikhanda nxa ekhuluma: *“Well done Tim. That is the kind of responsible behaviour I expect from my managers. In these difficult times, conserving fuel is a service not only to the company, but also the country as a whole. Fuel is foreign currency and foreign currency is to a modern economy what oxygen is to a living thing.”*

Anikine ikhanda awise iphika uMark. Aqhubeke ngelakhe ilizwi, “Angithandabuzi ukuthi sekukuphuzele ukufika endlini ulayinise umkakho labantwana ubatshale ukuthi uyi *good African* emehlweni abelungu. Ngiyabona lami kumele ngikwenzele amhlophe – amhlophe ke sikhothamathe samakhiwa. Kusukela namhlanje usungokulikhwa lawe, usungomunye wabo.” Wathi khwindlu ingalo yakhe ngasala ngibambe umoya, waqakeza phambi kobuso bami engathi uthi “Ekukhotheni amathe amakhiwa, ngikupha isicoco saphezulu.”

Ngayidumela futhi ingalo yakhe, ngamdonsa sehla amastepisi. Yithi labo sidlula omama ababili abasebenza eswitshibhodi lapho esamukela khona izivakatshi. Yithi labaya siqonda komunye wemikhandlo okuflo yakuqala. Watshinga wakhonona ngingamuzwa. Ngamdonsa. Ngamfuqela phakathi kwehofisi yami. Ngavala umnyango. Kwakubhalwe imilayezo yefoni eyayitshiywe phezu kwekhalenda etafuleni – angizange ngibe lendaba layo. Okwakuqakathekile ngaleso sikhathi yikuqedelana lo Mark.

“Zwana Mark,” ngatsho ngihwabha ngimkhomba ngomunwe oqhaqhazelayo.

“Uyabona manje ebengikutsho. Usuqalisile futhi isikhiwa sakho. Mina ngingu Makaziwe. Yilo ibizo lami lokuzalwa, elilembali, eliqakathekileyo emulini yakwethu lakimi. Wonke umuntu onsundu, umtanenhlabathi, uyakwazi ukuqakatheka kwamabizo ethu esintu, hatshi uTimothy Mdlongwa. Njengobhosi bakho amakhiwa, ukuthola kungumsebenzi ukubiza amabizo esintu, ubone kungcono ukutshintshela ibizo lami esikhiweni uthi nginguMark.”

Nganxapha ngokunengeka okukhulu. “Ungabalekel’ iqiniso ngokuzitshaya ummeli wabeNsundu, esasikwenza sisafunda eyunivesithi ingqondo zingakavuthwa. Okusalayo yikwenza izinto ngemfanelo. Ngilikhiwa ngaphi nxa ngisebenzisa iphethro yami ngingayimotshi? Akulabukhiwa lapho! Okuhluphayo ngawe labanye abacabanga njengawe, yikuthi libona ubandlululo lalapho olungekho khona. Ukuzenzisa kwakho kuphuma khonapho, ubusubona ingani thina abanye sizitshaya amakhiwa. Licina selisithi ukwenza izinto ngemfanelo ayisikho kwabeNsundu.”

Wafaka izandla ezikhwameni, waqhuba isisu sotshwala phambili, wangikhangela okomuntu ongizwela usizi uMark. Wanikina ikhanda, wawisa iphika. “Kanti awulazihlobo elokitshini kumbe emaphandleni?”

“Ngilazo, ngingaziswela njani?” ngabhavuma. “Kungena njani lokho ku-”

“Kuhle, kukho konke futhi!” wakhwaza, isandla sakhe siyaluzela emoyeni okomkhokheli wepolitiki ekhuluma eralini. “I *African* sibili, neghlala ivakatshela izihlobo. Umtanenhlabathi uyayiqeda du iphethro yakhe

evakatshela izihlobo zakhe. Kusobala ukuthi wena uzibona ungafani lathi. Ngempelaviki uyazivalela ngemva kwemiduli emide esabhabha ubukele isathelayithi TV. Uqeda lapho usutshaya umsila phambi kwamakhiwa akho, njengenja evela dobha isigojwana esiphoswe ngubasi – ‘basi, mina ngingcono kulamanye ama*African*. Ngiyayiseva eyami iphethro.”

Ngamhleka ususlu ngasengisithi, “Utsho ukuthi ukuyakosa inyama lamasoseji ngempelaviki ulezidandane yikho ukuzilibazisa kwe *African* uqobo? Khonapho uyabe uphume 40 kilometres phandle kwedolobho.”

Wahwaqa uMark, walunguza phandle ngewindi. Kwakudlula inkalakatha yethiraki yamalahle phandle. Sathula lapho idlula. Watshibilika uMark isidlulile wasesithi, “Ngingcono kulawe oqeda impelaviki yonke esofeni ulalele uMozart.”

“Uyazi, angibehlukanisi mina uMozart lalo omunye wakhe... u... kanje bamuthi ngubani? UBeethoven. I Reggae yiwo umculo wami. Asimculo wase Afrika, owabantu abeNsundu?”

Indaba yesidandane yayihlabe yephukela kuMark, yamthena amandla. Wayengaselawo awokuthi siqhubeke sixabana. Nanku phela lamahungahunga ayethi wayesezibambile kuntombi yase *accounts* eyayihlala ihleka okungapheliyo. “Kulomuntu okufanele ngimbone khathesi,” watsho uMark esithi mfe!

“Asihle siqedelane. Nguwe ongicalileyo,” ngatsho ngokuthukuthela. “Ukuthandana lomuntu ongaphansi kwakho emsebenzini yikho ukuba ngumtanenhlabathi lokho?” Ngingakaqedelani laye wathi puntshu waphuma ehofisini yami.

Ngasengihlala phansi ukuthi ngisebenze. Ngayazame ngayazame ukusebenza, kwala. Enye inkulumo kaMark yayingihlabile. Kambe ngangizenza ikhiwa sengikhohlwa ukuthi umuntu omnyama uphila njani? Ngasengingumthengisi? Okwakuliqiniso yikuthi ngasengilenyanga ezimbili ngingavakatshelanga sona isihlobo esisodwa. Kodwa ngangizavakatsha njani mina ngitshona ngibambekile? Ngibambekile ngisenzani? Umkhonomi weZimbabwe wawumi kubi. Lokho kwasekuseza umsebenzi wami njengomaneja othenga izinto zenkampani ubenzima kakhulu, ngingasitholi isikhathi sokuthi ngenze okunye. Phezu kokuthi imali yayingatholakali lula, izinto ezazifunwa yinkampani lazo zazingatholakali. Kuthi kunjalo, wonke umuntu emsebenzini ekhangelele ukuthi ngizithole zonke lezi zinto ngesikhathi ezifuneka ngaso. Engisebenza labo kwasekungathi bahlala ehofisini yami, befuna lokhu lalokhuya. Kwasekungathi ngingumvundla usekelwa yizinja.

Ngisakhula zinengi izinto okwakuthiwa ziyazila. Lawo mazilo ayetshiwo ekuseni, mini, lantambama. Ungahambi nyovane, unyoko uzawela

eqhageni. Ungahlali emgwaqweni uzamila amathumba ezibunu. Uke ulinge ukutshaya umlozwi kumbe ukhwelo endlini, inyoka zizangena zigcwale zithi phamu. Nanko-ke sengikhulile, ngisebenzela inkampani epheka utshwala, kwakulenzilo eyodwa eqakathekileyo – ungaqali ukwenza, kumbe ukhohlwe ukwenza ulutho olungenza inkampani ivalwe.

Ukwephula linzilo yenkampani uhle uthathiswe unyawo khonapho. Yikho nje ubusuku lemini, ngempelaviki langamakhefu, ngangimatasatasa ngibona ukuthi imitshina yenkampani ayimi.

Njengoba izinto zazimi ngalolohlobo, kwakulicala yini ukuthi ngeMigqobilelo ngiphumule ngokudlala igolufu labanye omaneja eklabhini yethu? Emva kwalokho, sasizikwejisela sisidla, sizinathela lengxoxo isitsha. Ngubani osemsebenzini onjengowami ongaziyo ukuthi zithiywa emthonjeni? Phela yiso lesi sikhathi sokudala ubudlelwano labanye abakubhizimusi yokuthwala impahla, ukuthenga lokuthengiselana – abantu abaqakathekileyo kowami umsebenzi. Nxa ngingasenzanga njalo, ngibabone ngaphi? Nini?

Ngaseqiniseni, yisiphi isihlobo esasingangisiza kukho konke lokhu okuphathelelane lomsebenzi wami owawusunzima ngenxa yesimo esibi somkhonomi? Ingqondo yagijima yaya emnyakeni ophelileyo. Sasikobabakazi, komunye wemihlangano *yeburial society* esasisiba layo kanye ngenyanga. Kwakumele siqale ngo 2 emini. Kwaze kwatshaya u hafu pasti 2 sibathathu khona kumele sibelitshumi lanhlanu. Sasihlezi endlini yokukwejisa ubabakazi elungisa okunathwayo ekhithshini.

“Kukhanya lonyaka ngenye indlala,” ngumzawami uZamani lowo ngemva kokubingelelana. Lawe uyazi ukuthi ukubingelelana kwesintwini kuthatha isikhathi eside. “UJenyuwari usezaphela, ngitsho lona ithonsi.” Nganqekuza ikhanda ngoba ngikuzwisisa ukukhathazeka kwakhe. Wayethe evala emsebenzini ngoDisemba wagijimela ukuyalima ekhaya. Kuthe kusithi Jenyuwari, yena lemuli yakhe sebhulane i40kg yomumbu lezinye izilimo. Imibiko yayisifika buthumuthumu ukuthi ngenxa yokusweleka kwezulu, izilimo zasezitshile emasimini ilizwe lonke. Yikho nje laye uZamani wayekhathazekile, ezibonela sekutshe qhu emasimini akhe. Wanikina ikhanda waphinda njalo wathi, “ngitsho lona ithonsi.”

“Ukungani kwezulu kudalwa yithi,” ngumalume uNqabeni lowo ehlokoza umoya ngomunwe. “Liyangazi lonke ukuthi ngingumsekeli omkhuku kaMdala uJoshua Nkomo. Kodwa lapho aphambanisa khona angimkhekhelezi. Waphambanisa kakhulu uNkomo lamasotsha akhe bevela empini eZambia. Basebenqobile yebo, kodwa endaweni yokuthi aye eNjelele labadala, yena wahamba lokungabafanyana lokhu okwasekungamaqhawe. Kusobala, yazonda iNjelele labaphansi. Ngitsho lasemandulo, amabutho

ayengaqakathekanga ukwedlula abadala. Phinde silibone izulu lisina ngemfanelo kuze kulungiswe ihlazo leli.”

“Sibili,” avume aze anqekuze lekhandla uZamani. “Amasiko kumele alandelwe. Phezu kwephutha likaNkomo lelo, thina lathi abantukazana siphethe siyawathethisa amadlozi. Amantombazane asehamba nqunu ezitaladeni ngama minisiketi lezikipa ezitshiya isibhono phandle, singasatsho lamabhulugwe abawathi ngama hipstazi, abamba mpa ingani umuntu ugqoke amathumbu.”

“Ungagconi abafazi kuphela,” kwatsho ubabakazi engena ephethe ithireyi elokunathwayo. “Uwatshiya ngaphi amadoda amadala alala lamankazana angaba ngabantwababo?”

“Ukubamba osibare amabele lisiko lethu. Angithi sifuna zikhule masinya intume zabo, bavuthwe babe ngabafazi abazwayo,” kwatsho uNqabeni ehleka kancane. “Silebala elichaza lokhu esintwini – ukulamuza. Okufunakalayo yikuthi indoda ibasuthise osibare kukho konke angabe bekufuna. Ngaleyo ndlela akulalutho olubi nxa indoda elomusa ithandana lamantombazana amancane. Indoda enza lokhu yenza into ezimbili: iyawavuthisa amankazana ukuthi abe ngamakhosikazi oqobo njalo ihamba ihlanyela inotho yayo ukuze abaswelayo bathole labo. Ngileqiniso lokuthi abaphansi abakusoli lokho. Okungasisiko lakithi yikuthi amajaha eluke inwele. Kumele sense izinto ngemfanelo ukuthi sithole izulu eleneleyo.”

“Kube sekulimangalisa nxa izulu sesingasalitholi iminyaka ilandelana. Yisijeziso sikaMlimu ebona amanyala eliwenza lisithi ngamasiko!” Watsho esecaphukile ubabakazi. Amadoda ahleka.

Ngingakakhulumi ngasusa isikhwehlela. “Ngileqiniso lokuthi ilizwe libhekane lokutshintsha komkhathi okukhulu, okuyinto yomhlaba wonke.”

“Ukutshintsha kwani?” babuza bonke.

“Ukutshintsha kwento ezinengi eziphathelelane lomkhathi, kusiya ngokuthi wena ungaphi komhlaba. Ukukhwela kokutshisa, ukuphunguleka kwezulu, izulu likazamcolo kanye lokungani kwalo.”

Wahleka engahleki uZamani. “Asithi yonke lento oyibalisayo iliqiniso, ivele idalwa yini?”

“Abekomkhathi bathi kubangwa yikugamula izihlahla kakhulu, intuthu yamalahle, ukutshisa i-oyili le gasi, kanye lemililo yasendle. Konke lokhu kudala intuthu enengi esuka ihlale phezu emoyeni ibe yisidikiselo, ukutshisa kwehluleke ukuphuma kusiya phezu.”

Anikine ikhanda angangikholwa uZamani aze aphumisele, “Uyakukholwa konke lokho?”

“Okunye akutshoyo uTim kuliqiniso,” ngumalume uNqabeni lowo engani uyadonda ukukhuluma. “Lami ngiyavuma ukuthi kungenxa

yokutshintsha komkhathi umhlaba wonke ngenxa yokunganaki kwethu esikwenzayo. Umntakadadewethu, umzukululu wami uKhathazile, uke wangifonela eseLondon kulezinsuku. Uthe ubusika buya buqanda ngamandla eminyakeni emihlanu edlulileyo. Ngikhuluma nje, uJenyuwari abakuye uqanda ukwedlula bonke oJenyuwari eminyakeni engamatshumi amahlanu edlulileyo. Yikho sibili ukuguquka komkhathi lokho. UKhathazile ubuye wathi ijimu aya kuyo ntambama yayiyindawo yokukhonzela, yatshintshwa. Liyababona-ke abantu beLondon ukuganga kwabo? Bangenwe yini kanti? Bangatshintsha indawo kaMlimu bayenze eyokudlalela? Yizo lezizinto ezidala ukutshintsha komkhathi. Indawo yonke abantu sebelahle inkolo lamasiko abo. Kusobala ukuthi uMlimu uzondile-”

“Malume,” ngamqaga umlomo, “kulobufakazi obeneleyo obe sayensi obukhomba ukuthi...” Ilizwi lami laginywa luhleko lwabo bobathathu.

“Khula Timothy,” watsho uZamani, “asikho eklasini yesayensi lapha. Iqiniso yikuthi asikho isimanga saleloyezi othi lembese isibhakabhaka.”

Ukuzama kwami ukuchasisa kwaphelela emoyeni sengibona ukuthi bathi ngiyawumana.

Igiga kanje lemicabango lokhu ngihlezi phambi kwetafula yami emsebenzini. Nginxaphe lapho ngikhumbula ukuthi yibo laba bantu uMark afuna ngichithe isikhathi sami labo. Kanti ngivele ngizihluphelani ngombono womuntu onuka intuthu yekhaya njengo Mark mina ngilezinto eziqakathekileyo, njengokuthenga izifefe zeminye imitshina? Ngasengifonela uSandra ko*City Bearings* ukuthi ngizwe ukuba wayesengitholele yini lezo zifefe, nanku phela wayelokhu engithembisa okungapheliyo. “Awuyitholanga imeseji yami izolo?” wabuza uSandra ezwakala ethabe! “Ngilazo izifefe zakho kodwa okwamanje ngisagijimela kwenye isuphamakethi lapho engithenjise khona ama 10kg empuphu amahlanu. Kimi inengi kakhulu impuphu le. Uyayifuna lawe? Intengo yakhona ngesemthethweni?”

“Kakhulu,” ngimthabisa kuphela. Ngangilayo impuphu mina lemuli yami, eyayizasiqhuba okwenyanga ezimbili.

Ngemva kwehola, uSandra wayesethelekile lezifefe kunye lemigodla yempuphu emibili. Ngamlanda lapho ayepake khona ukuze angahlutshwa ngomantshingelane. Nganqekuza ikhanda ngokuthaba ngasengiphosela impuphu ebhuthini lemota yami, iMazda 626.

Kanje ngemva kwenyanga ezintathu impuphu iyabola. Ngumcabango owangifikelayo sengibuyela ehofisini. Phezu kwalokho, noma isitshwala kuthiwa yikudla kwesintu uqobo, mina ngangingelandaba laso, ngizonda bona ubunampunampu baso. Futhi kasihlabusi ngitsho! Ngizisole

ngokungathandi kwami isitshwala. Yizo phela izinto ezinje ezenza uMark athi angisuye muntu omnyama ophелеleyo, ngizenza ikhiwa.

Masinyane nje, ngasengisazi ukuthi ngizakwenzani ukuze uMark akholwe ukuthi ngingumuntu omnyama qho. Ngatshibilika ngingakangeni ehofisini. Yimi lowa ngibuyela emoteni. Ngemva kwemizuzu elitshumi ngasengiyitshaya ngidlula eThothali eMpopoma, ngiqonde ePhumula. Kwasekulenyanga ezithize ngacina ukudrayiva emalokitshini. Kwakumnandi ukubona ukuphithizela kwelokitshini. Ngezwa ngikhululeka, ngichelesa. Phela ilokitshi lahlukile lamasabhabha athuleyo, aphonguba ndikindiki nje. Zazinyakazela imota noma iphethro yayingatholakali lula. Abantwana besikolo labo babetshatshama ngamayunifomu besiya le lale. Omama ababegqoke amayunifomu amatshetshi atshiyeneyo bangikhumbuza ukuthi kwakungoLwesine.

Ngithe ngipaka phambi kwendlu kababakazi, ngamthola nangu engadini yamaluba ukhotheme uyawahlakulela. Wazelula kancane kancane, ekhanya ekhathazekile, ethukile. Kwazise wayecabanga ukuthi ngiza lombiko omubi.

“Konke kulungile nje?” kwaba yikungibingelela kwakhe evula igedi elalicina esifubeni ubude.

“Kakhulu,” ngatsho ngibobotheka.

Wahleka okomuntu ongakholwayo akuzwayo. “Ngigeze kusiphi ekuseni lokhu ngizengivakatshelwe ngabaqakathekileyo? Ungadlalingami, yini ekubeka la?”

“Akulalutho. Yikukukhanuka kuphela. Yikho ngilapha,” ngatsho ngelosedanile. “Besengikukhanuka sibili,” ngatsho ngichaya izandla ngendlela ethi yimi wonke lo, ungenza noma yini oyifunayo ngami.

“Wenzile,” watsho engixhawula isandla kodwa kukhanya ukuthi kakukholwa engimtshela khona. Amehlo akhe ayelokhu elensolo. Yithi labo siqhubana sibhoda ngemva singena ngomnyango wekhithshini, siqonde endlini yokuhlala. Sengihlezi esofeni ngabuza ukuthi abanye banjani. Wajabula ukungilandisela ngokwakusanda kwenzakala emulini yakoMdlongwa. Kuthe imizuzu elitshumi lanhlana engakatshayi u 2, omunye engangisebenza laye wangifonela ku selifoni yami engikhumbuza ngomhlangano owawuzaqala ngo 2.

“Angisoze ngenelise ukuba khona,” ngamphendula, “kulomunye wabantu esithola kubo izinto oqakathekileyo okumele ngimbone.”

“Kodwa...”

“Ungathi kodwa. Ngingahle ngiliphathele izifefe lezi elihlala likhala ngazo.”

Ngithe ngiqeda ukukhuluma kuselifoni ngabona ubabakazi engivulela ilihlo, “Hawu, sengingomunye wabantu othola kubo izinto zemsebenzini?”

“Utsho kahle. Angithi ungipha indaba eziqakatekileyo ngemuli yethu. Kungayisuwe Anti, ngabe ngiyini? Angithi ngabe ngiyinto nje engelabani.”

Wangikhangela ubabakazi ngokumangala okuhlangene lenjabulo. “Nxaxafuna ukuzwa okunengi ubuye phela ngoMgqibelo ozayo. Lilanga lomhlangano we *burial society*. Kudala phela wacina ukuba semhlanganweni we *burial* lathi.”

Ngakutshaya indiva ukuthi usengisola. Saqhubeka sixoxa ngaze ngavalelisa. Sithe sihamba kancane siqonde iMazda, nangu umfazi omfitshane oqatha, uthandele ilembu elimabalabala athe kla, esiza kithi.

“Yinkalakatha kasomangase yenalo mama,” wanyenyeza ubabakazi. “Simuthi ngu *Dot Com*. Uthungatha zona indaba ezimbi ukuthi azifafaze.” Ubabakazi azenze umuntu othabileyo ukubona u*Dot Com* athi, “Sakubona nkazana,” lapho u*Dot Com* eseseduze.

“Konke kulungile?” wabuza u *Dot Com* ngelizwi lomuntu olozwelo, ozwisisayo.

Wabobotheka ubabakazi engaqondanga ngitsho ukwenza njalo wasesithi, “Izinto azikaze zihambe kuhle kangaka.”

“Manje yindaba isethekeli sihlale isikhathi eside kangaka?”

“Awu, utsho lokho,” wahleka ubabakazi elabhula isandla emoyeni. “Thina abakoMdlongwa siyavakatshelana ukuthi sazi kuhle ukuthi banjani abanye.”

“Yebo?” ngu *Dot Com* lowo esejamajama, kodwa ubabakazi wathi kwakukhona okunye okomndeni okwakumele sikuphethe.

Uthe u*Dot Com* esanda kusuka ubabakazi wathi, “Ukuvakatsha kwakho kungijabulise kakhulu! Kukalutshwana phela ngapha kithi, ukuthola izimota zezikhulu zimi emagedini ethu kungela mdlalo loba umbiko oqakathekileyo.”

Sisakhuluma ngathi bhode emva kwemota, ngavula ibhuthi, ngakhupha umgodla wempuphu owodwa ngathi, “Nansi impuphu Anti.” Okwesikhatshana watshelwa ngamathe emlonyeni.

“Mtan’omnwewethu,” watsho ekucineni, “uthunywe ngamadlozi akithi. Uyakwazi ukuthi sesilensuku ezine singasazi isitshwala emlonyeni?” Wawisa iphika. “UNkulunkulu kuphela nguye ozakwazi ukuthi akubonge njani.”

Ngaphanga ngangena emoteni sengisesaba ukuthi amehlo ami ayesehlengezela inyembezi, ayezaphanga abe yimifula yazo. Ngavalelisa masinyane ngikhulumela emazinyweni, ngayisusa imota ngahamba.

Sengisemangweni, ngahlala ngazinza esihlalweni semota ngavuleka ngezwi eliphezulu ngisithi, “Khuluma lami Makaziwe. Abaphansi bakhulume lami, ubabakazi uziqhenya ngami. NgoMgqibelo ozayo, awusoze ungibone egolufu klabhu. Ngizabe ngilomndeni wami – pho, yibukhiwa lobo? Angisi muntu oNsundu qho?”

Kwenziwa umfazi ophелеleyo

Thabisani Ndlovu

USkhumba uzama ukutshela uAnti Mongi ukuthi uyamthanda futhi kalali ngokumcabanga. Abadala kwesinye isikhathi bayawumana sibili. Uhle ubone ngamehlo akhona esegijima egcwala indawo yonke ukuthi kukhulunywa idoti kuphela. Khangela amehlo kaSkhumba. Avele wona mancane engani ngawenungu. Awahlangani lawabanye njengawenja elisela. Khathesi asemancane engani ucimezile. Uz'ubone, kuthiwa abafazi bayamfela uSkhumba. Balwa badlephane, balumane kubangwa yena. Indoda elekhala inkalakatha engathi lidlamedlu lithe qotshotsho ebusweni bakhe! Ngapha umuntu unuka njengempango! Azame futhi. Azulise izandla kancane, aziphenduphendule. Ehluleke ukutsho afuna ukukutsho. Enelise ukuthi, *Ngithanda ukulala*. Achaye izandla zikhangele phezulu esibhakabhakeni uAnti ebuza, *Manje?*

“Umtshele,” nguSkhumba lowo eqondise kimi, “ukuthi *ifiga* yakhe iyangihlanyisa. Angikaze ngimbone umfazi obunjwe njengaye eJanke lapha. Noma amanye amadoda ethi ulomnyama, mina ngithi lutho! Noma elawo lowo mnyama, angilandaba. Umtshele ukuthi ululuju lwami lombondo. Nxa ngicabanga ngaye lokudla kuyala. Inhliziyo yami iyavutha, nguye kuphela ongayithoba.”

USkhumba kangihlaleli pho? Angathi ngitshela uAnti izinto zonke lezi? Phela mina uAnti Mongi ngimbona ngokuvalwa kwezikolo kuphela. Manje uthi umnyama lo akhuluma ngawo ngiwutolike njani? Lenhliziyo yakhe evutha amalangabi? USkhumba uzitshaya isihlakaniphi, ekhuluma amanyala wonke la, ngamazinyo angathi ubesidla udaka ngenxa yegwayi lomgoqwa wamanyuziphepha angalehliyo. Indoda endala ungayizwa iwumana kanje, icimecimeza, ilolonga lelizwi ingathi ikhuluma lesigulane esisembhedeni wesibhedlela, akukho ekufunayo ngaphandle kokufaka into yayo kweyomfazi. Ngikwazi mhlophe lokho. Ngeke angiqile uSkhumba. Yikho ngiphendula ngokukhombela yena, ngikhombele uAnti Mongi, ngiveze isithupha esihlohlelwe phakathi komunwe wokukhomba lolandelayo.

Ukuthi uphini lufike njani ekhanda lika Skhumba, ngezake ngitsho. Engikubonayo yimpama yophini isigiqika enhlabathini, lesitshwala ebesinamathele ephinini sesihlangene lenhlabathi. Atsho ngemva kuka Skhumba uAnti Mongi. Athathele ngesiqubu uSkhumba. Akhwele ehle ngomzaca wophini esiphundu sika Skhumba u Anti Mongi. Amthaphuze aze akhale njengomfanyana uSkhumba. Isithutha sendoda lesi. Bekumele akhumbule ukuthi uAnti welusa. Uqine saka – ukugijima lokhu kuye yinto encane. Kodwa akusamelanga aziphathe ngalendlela uAnti Mongi. Usengumfazi okhulileyo. Sokumele aziphathe kuhle. Yikho uKhulu atshona ekutsho. Nguye phela ophekela wonke umuntu lapha ekhaya. Ikakhulu uKhulu othanda ukudla okuphekwe nguAnti. Zikhathi zonke nxa eguqa uAnti, esipha uKhulu ukudla, kusala kancane ukuthi afe ngohleko, kodwa azibambe. Nxa sesisodwa, aphulule isilevu, azikhombele esifubeni, abesesenza samuntu odla ngokuphangisa kobuhwaba. Elule izandla eceleni kwakhe etshengisa ukuqhela. Ngihle ngibone ukuthi uthi uKhulu uthanda ukudla kakhulu; yikho eyisidudla. Akhangele phezulu, afe ngohleko! Uthi mina loKhulu asiyiwa ekudleni. Alale ngohleko aze akhale.

UKhulu utshona esithi ngabe uAnti Mongi usephekela umkakhe khathesi. Kanti ufuna ukuthi aze acuthe ezimhlophe elokhu ephekela uyise? Kuzamsiza ngani lokho? Kulamadoda amabili afuna uAnti Mongi. Kulo Skhumba lo othi lanxa eledlamedlu lamakhala, enuka njengempango, uthandwa ngabafazi. Abafazi bayamangalisa sibili. Besekuzoba lo Jamu. UJamu ngumuntu yini lawe? Ikhanda ligcwele inkume kuphela.

Ngimhleke uSkhumba ngize ngikhale. Athi ephenduka uAnti athole lokhe ngomile ngohleko. Angikhombe ngomzaca wophini angisikize engathi uzangivathuza ngawo lami. Ngivike ngitshone phansi engathi ngethuke kakhulu. Angikhombele ngomunwe. Akhombele ikhanda lakhe, abhodise isandla sonke, *Uvele lawe uyazihlanyela nje.* Ngingekuze ikhanda ngivumelana laye, ngapha ngibobotheka. Angisikize njalo. Aqhaqheke ngohleko, kuvele amazinyo akhe amhlophe nke, athi nxa ethule alunguze kancane. Sisinsitheke size sigonane. Abeselingisa ukuthi umbhule njani uSkhumba – indoda endala ibethela ngejubane, inyawo zitshaya esiphundu, yena uAnti eyithaphuza ngomzaca wophini. Lapho kungathi uyangiqumbaqumba! Ngihleke ngize ngigiqike phansi. Athi ephuma ekhitshini umama athole sifile ngohleko. Abesesithi, “Heyi, lina! Lisitshiyele phela lathi njengoba selizaqeda lonk’ uhleko emhlabeni.” Akhangele uAnti Mongi, achaye izandla zikhangele phezulu, *Kuyini?* Awuninele khatshana umbuzo kamama, ngapha ekhangele eceleni ngendlela ethi, *Tshiyana lathi, yindaba uthanda ukuthenga indaba ongazaziyo?*

USkhumba ulayekile. Uzakame izibozi atshona ezikhuluma. “Laphaya kulomfazifazi,” utshona esitsho njalo ngoAnti Mongi, “Ibhulugwe lihle libemanzi nxa ngimkhangele.” Ayamhleka amanye amadoda nxa esekhuluma idoti enje. Ngelinye ilanga omunye walamadoda wasesithi, “Wena Skhumba, ubukhali kakhulu. Khathesi usufuna *lumfazi*? Sonke sithi singambona sivukelwe, kodwa ungubani wena othi ufuna ukumuzwa? Qaphela fanami! Uzalutheza olulenkume. Uzenza bani wena? Ucabanga ukuthi ukubunjwa kühle kukaMongi lokhu kukodwa? Ungambulala lonyoko phela nxa engatsho uMongi. Ufuna ukubona izibunu zenyoka wena? Uyibambe ngomsil’ inyoka mfana wami. Ngikufisel’ inhlanhla.”

“Abafazi!” Ababaze uKhulu aze anikine ikhanda. “Uyakwazi ukuthi iqhiye kaNyokokhulu ifihle ezimhlophe?” Ngeminye yembuzo ayibuza engaqonde kubuza. Nangu phela ngemva kokubuza uzivungulela amazinyo akhe, akhangele eceleni, ubone lemehlweni ukuthi usekhatshana, vele kasangiboni. Noma kunjalo, ngingekuze ikhanda. Akhafule akuvunguleyo. Kuseselamazinyo yini? Asekhumuke phose wonke. Lemhlathi isibuzana amavuko. “Ungacabanga ukuthi unyokokhulu wazi ngcono ngento lezi? Heh? Ngitsho! Uyambona khathesi, uzitshaya umuntu ongaziyo ukuthi uyihlokazi udinga usizo.” Kuthi ngimbuze ukuthi “Esizwa ngani?” Ngingakaboni ukuthi vele uKhulu ukhuluma lami kumbe yedwa, abesesithi, “Uyihlokazi, uMongi kumele abe ngumfazi opheleleyo isikhathi singakamtshiyi. Noma nje eyimbebebe, eyisacuthe, yisidalwa sikaMlimu laye. Kumele simnakekele.” Bajayele ukutsho njalo abantu ngo Anti Mongi, “Ah shem mani, isidalwa sikaMlimu bakithi. Kodwa ifiga yakhe! Bangaki abafazi abalefiga enje? Liqiniso sibili ukuthi uMlimu ngeke akuphe konke.”

Angikhangele uKhulu ngamehlo akhe asebona luvilibana. Ngingekuze ikhanda. Usehlala eficafica amehlo kulezinsuku. Aya esibalenkundu amehlo akhe; aya ebuphofini ngiyabona. Ngisikholisa okwamagama isitulo angibazele sona. Sokulamalanga amathathu esibazile. Sifana lesakhe xathu, kodwa esami sincane. Emaceleni silenyoka ezintathu ezithandeleneyo. Amakhada azo aseduzeduze engathi kukhona ezikunyenyezelanayo.

“Mtanomtanami, ulizibulo lezibulo lami. Ngibonga abaphansi lophezulu ukuthi izinto zahamba ngendlela, wabangumfana. Ngelinye ilanga, uzaba ngubaba womuntu wonke lapha ekhaya. Uyazibona inyoka lezi? Laphawu lwethu, zimele amadlozi akithi. Hlala lapha eceleni kwami mtanomtanami sidle, ufunde ukuba yindoda emadodeni.” NguKhulu lowo ngelanga engipha lesi situlo. Mina lo Khulu, inyama siyayidakaza. Siyidla size siyikhangele.

Ukhulu uthi kusasa sizakuyadinga izihlahla zokwelapha. Abesesithi okwamanje kanginathe umuthi angipha wona. Unjalo phela uKhulu.

Inkulumo yakhe ithi tshompo lapha, tshompo laphaya, njengentethe. Usadaka olubomvu lowomuthi, futhi utshelela okwedelele. Awubabi njengalowa angiphe wona izolo. “Lo, fanami, uqinisa amathambo lemsipha. Nxa sekuyisikhathi sokuthi uzale abantwana...” athi qha umunwe waphakathi lesithupha, “kanye nje. Kumele uqine saka, mtanomtanami. Khathesikhathesi uzaba lendeve entweni. Letha ngapha imbodlela.” Athi nku...nku...nku... okuseleyo aqede athi ahh samuntu onatha into emnandi, njengabantu labaya abanatha ikhokhokhola ku TV. Esibunu sembodlela kuvele okungamajodwanyana okungathi yisagenama. Kusikwe phakathi laphakathi. Phezu kwakho kulokhula oluyibulembu, olufana lalolu olutholakala emanzini omfula. Manengi amambodlela afana lale. Amanye alenzipho, amakhanda, imisila lezangaphakathi zezinanakazana ezingaqedakaliyo!

Abantu abanengi basuka khatshana belanda yonale imithi kaKhulu. Abanye bafika behamba betanasa. UKhulu uthi batanasa nje ngenxayobuhlungu obudalwa yimikhuhlane ebaqeda izitho zangaphambili. Yikho phela uKhulu elenkomo ezinengi. Abanye balaba ababuya betanasa, babuyela kibo sebehamba kuhle. Beze njalo sebeqhuba inkomo eyodwa kumbe ezimbili. Abanye ngabaphenduka bezobonga ukuthi sebezabethola inzalo eyayingavumi. Amanye amakhehla ngabobothekayo, engathi ngabafana besikolo abangezwayo, ezobonga ukuthi asengamadoda apheleleyo njalo – amahloka asegamula! Uthola amakhehla la eqhuba imbuzi zize zibembili. Nxa kulento ayaziyo uKhulu, yikuthabisa abantu. Abanye ubenza babebatsha, babelamandla enkunzi.

Kuleziko eliphandle phambi kwekhithsi. UAnti Mongi ukhanzinga amabhanzi ngepani. Esitsheni esiseceleni kwalapho aguqe khona, kulasevuthiwe. Ngikhombele esitsheni, ngikhongozele ngezandla zombili. Angikhangele, abobotheke, abesengikhombela ngomunwe odlalayo okomuntu othi, *Wena, zibambe!* Awakhangele amabhanzi. Enze samuntu owadobhayo, ewaphosela emlonyeni. Agunqule amehlo engathi uyakhanywa, abe seqhelisa izandla emaceleni. Uthi yena, *Into ozayithola emabhanzini ngamafutha lefulawa, yibuhaga lobududla.* Umama uthi akusimabhanzi azangisa lapho – yinyama le uKhulu angipha yona nsuku zonke. UKhulu yena uthi ungifundisa ukuba ngumnumzana. Umnumzana yindoda ekholisa izithelo zamandla ayo. Yindoda efundisa abantwabayo, labantwana babantwabayo ukuthi ukuba lesithunzi kutshoni. Yindoda eyesaba ihlazo lokuba lemkenkethe yabantwana, labazukulu abangabayanga – omatshay’inja ngekhanda, bevele labo beyizinja. UKhulu uthi emzini womnumzana, inyama iphekwa ngomhluzi wenye. Uthi yena kulemibuso emithathu emaNdebeleni – inyama, utshwala labafazi. Athi

ngiyiphinde imibuso khona ezabona ukuthi ngizwisisile. Ngiziphinde lezi zinto zontathu. Athi hatshi azilandelani njalo. Kuqakathekile ukuthi ngizibize ngokulandelana kwazo ngoba nxa kungasenjalo, isifundo angisitholanga kuhle. “Abafazi bengakutshiya fanami kodwa inyama lotshwala kuzahlala kulawe!” Aqhubekele phambili, “Futhi angeke ubemdala kakhulu okokuthi awusenelisi ukudla inyama kumbe ukunatha utshwala. Nxa amazinyo esehlupha, ungadla phela inyama ebuthakathaka, eyokulijongosi kumbe okulithokazi. Kungehlula lapho uyayichola inyama emanzi kumbe imhwabha. Uyakwazi khonokho?” Ngithi angikwazi.

UAnti Mongi awakhombele futhi amabhanzi asesitsheni. Enze samuntu okhafulayo, ‘Mptu...mptu...mptu!’ Ukhafula nje ikhanda ulitshekisele eceleni, isandla sokudla siyaluzela emoyeni. *Yingcekeza lokhu.* Wenza kanjalo lanxa ekhuluma ngabantu angabathandiyo, kumbe izinto ezingahambelani laye, njengamafutha okupheka ahlala embodleni. Ukuwapheka amabhanzi, hayi, uyawapheka sibili. Kodwa awangeni nxa ezama ukuwadla. Ukuvela azame ukudla elilodwa nje, uhle ahlanze. Amabhasi lezimota lakho akumvumi. Ukuhlala nje emoteni kumbe ebhasini uhlanza aze agonyuluke. Yikho nje engalugxobi edolobheni. Nxa efuna ukuthi edolobheni, wenza kanje: utshila isidrayivo esingekhoyo, akhombe empumalanga, lapho okuledolobho khona. Umama uthi uAnti wake waya edolobheni kudala, lami ngingakazalwa. Wagebha igodi wakhafula efunga ukuthi phinde aye khona njalo.

Kunengi angakugebhela igodi akhafula, ame ngesifungo sakhe. Njengokwala kwakhe ukuthwasiswa. Angithi ugogo ulabadala. Nguye owathi utshengisiwe ebuthongweni ukuthi amadlozi akhe azaphuma kuAnti. Kwaphekwa utshwala. Yakhala yahawula ingungu, kodwa uAnti Mongi ungambona? Watshona phansi okomswenya, wazovumbuluka ngemva kwamalanga amathathu.

Ukuthi angangincitsha ibhanzi elilodwa? Ngitsho! Ngikhongozele ngamandla, ngitshekise ikhanda, ngizulise umunwe owodwa emoyeni. *Elilodwa zwi.* Akhangele phezulu, ahleke kuvele amazinyo akhe amhlophe. Uhleka kuze kucazimule amehlo! Awakhombele njalo amabhanzi, elule ingalo eceleni kwakhe. Khathesi seziqhelise kakhulu. *Izinto lezi zizakunonisa okwedlula lokhu oyikho khona.* Lokhu kungikhumbuze ukuthi engifunda labo bayangihleka bathi nginguMafutha. Bubune ubuso bami ngoba uAnti laye usesenza njengabo. Ancibilike ahlabe elilodwa ngeforogwe angiphe. Aphinde athi uyangithanda kakhulu, ngezake angincitshela ibhanzi elilodwa. Ngisemncane wayetshona engibhabhule. Kulezinsuku usebeletha uSithembiso, umntaka bab’omncane uTalkmore.

UJamu usefike lapha kanenginegi ezokhuluma loAnti Mongi. Laye njengoSkhumba, kuyamehlula ukukhuluma kuhle loAnti. Uphanga aphelelwe yikuthi azithini izandla zakhe. Kuthiwe ngimncedise lapho asilela khona. Kodwa nguJamu sibili lo? Njengoba ngike ngatsho, nxa amadoda efuna ukufaka into zabo kwezabafazi, uthola sebesenza izinto zobulema. Nguphi umfana owelusayo ongalwaziyo uswazi luka Jamu nxa zidle ensimini yakhe? Katshayi uyabulala. Akulamfana omtshiyayo uJamu, ngaphandle kukaBafana. Phela uBafana ugijima njengomvundla – udenya ngezihlahla lezixuku, agijime ejingoza esiya le lale, athi khwimilili, ajike eduze, abethele ngejubane njalo. Yikho uJamu wehluleka ukumbamba uBafana. Kanti uJamu wayesithi lala lulaza ngikwengule. Wamzingela uBafana waze wamthola elele obukaBhuka emthunzini wegonde. Wambhula wambhula umfana waze wazichemela. Ekutshayeni, uyabulala kadlali uJamu. Bayamesaba futhi abazali. Ngubani ongama athi mpo, amkhangele eziqwini zamehlo ambuze ukuthi waphosa wabulala umntanami nje, kwenzenjani?

Ngumama ongizalayo kuphela. Umama kadlali njalo. Uyakutshela yonke into embi ayicabanga ngawe, aze akutshela lowakudla mnyakana wendlala. Ngithe ngelusile kumnyaka ophelileyo, zasezisiya kudla ensimini kaJamu. Wangiklwebha ngoswazi uJamu! Invinvinya zathi kla umzimba wonke. Kwasekusithi enye yalezi nvinvinya yadweba engathi izangixhophahleli. Mamo! Wayesemqalile umama! Wahlanga ngalelo langa! Wangihudula saqonda emzini kaJamu. “Wena mgulukudu wemfene! Wena, ufun’ ukungibulalel’ umntwana? Nhi? Yini ungazali owakho, uzibulalele santando? Uthethe abafazi baze baba bathathu. Ngitsho lokumithisa oyedwa! Ub’usufun’ ukubulala owami? Bakutshiyelani, lokhu phela uhamba ukhonya usithi uyinkunzi? Konke lokhu akusimlandu wami wenandoda amanye amadoda engekho! Ukuphinde nje umthinte umtanami, ngizakutshengis’ izibunu zenyoka.”

UJamu wama wathi khwimilili, ngitsho lokuthi athi klwe. Unkalakatha wayeseyisiduli sesawudo ngiyakutshela. Kusenjalo, ngizibuze ukuthi sewake wayizama yini eminye yemithi kaKhulu enza abangazaliyo bayithole inzalo.

Ngemva kwamalanga athize, uJamu engiklaze wangiklaza ngoswazi, ubaba wafika ekhaya evela edolobheni lapho asebenza khona. Umama wangikhiphisa iyembe wathi ubaba abone ukuthi uJamu uphose wangibulala njani. Kazange akunake umdala lokho. Umdala nango eqhubeka ezinathela itiyе yakhe. Waphonguthi jeqe inkomitshi yetiye ithe ngxi emlonyeni, wahwatha itiyе waginya andubana athi, “Kukhulwa njalo, uzaphola. Lathi sakhula kanje.” Umama wambuza ukuthi ungenwe yini ekhuluma kanje?

Kungaba yibo abafazi bakhe bedolobheni abenza angabi lendaba lomtanakhe? “Ngiyazi ukuthi awuselandaba lami. Akungikhathazi lokho. Nxa sekusehlula lokuthi ubelendaba lomtanakho, hayi, asazi- ke.” Ubaba yena waqhubeka ezinathela itiyi, ngitsho lokuthi amkhangele umama. Wasukuma wazihambela ngendlela kaKhulu ethi, “Abafazi bayahlanya.”

Etshingela uJamu, mhlawumbe umama wayesekhohliwe ukuthi uJamu ulenkalakatha zezibhakela lenkalakatha yamajambo. Kodwa umama.... Angazonda uhle abe luhlanya-hlanya. Ngubani ongakwaziyo ukuthi uJamu wake wasebenza emayini futhi kalasayizi yezicathulo. Wenza okokubazisa inkalakatha zezicathulo zakhe. Yikho abakwenzayo emayini ayesebenza khona. Bambazisela amajambo alokhe ewagqoka lanamhlanje. Kodwa aseguke! Isikhumba sesadleka phambili kwavela insimbi. Kolunye unyawo yavela kakhulu ukwedlula kolunye. Sekungathi ngofudu sebezantshobelisa amakhanda. Ngubani ongaziyo ukuthi izibhakela zikaJamu sezaqamula imhlathi, zavadlaza impumulo ematshwaleni? Imbambo azeephulayo ngokukhahlela ngamajambo, asikhulumi langazo. Phela kuthiwa watatshelwa amangoromera. Bathi kwasetshenziswa isibungu esingaboniyo esakhitshwa ebuchotsheni benqama ethanda ukulwa. Kuthiwa ungabanjengo Jamu ulwa uze uqamuke izandla lenyawo. Awumi lapho. Olwa laye ngaze akukupole amehlo ube yisiphofu, uqhubeka ujuja langamathambo, ufaza ngomkantsho. Yikho phela nxa abantu bethambisa amajongosi bebiza yena Jamu. Ngake ngambona ngelinye ilanga ethambisa ijongosi. Wayesebenzisa isandla esisodwa! Walithi hlasi ngophondo, ngapha eligaxa ijogwe. Kuthiwa lamajongosi ahlanyayo acina eseguqe ngamadolo aphambili nxa uJamu esewabambile.

Kodwa okwakhathesi uyabobotheka uthi kangitshale uAnti Mongi ukuthi uzaba lempilo emnandi angakhetha ukuhlala laye. Nanku phela ulenkomo ezidlana uboya. Uthi uAnti uzakudla konke akufunayo, athenge iziqgoko ezigculisa umoya wakhe. Amhleke usulu uAnti, athi ulakho konke ukudla akufunayo, futhi leziqgoko zakhe zanele. Liqiniso ukuthi uJamu ulenkomo ezinengi. Laye kakwazi ukuthi sezihlangene zonke zingaki. Ezinye wazisisela izihlobo zakhe ezihawulayo. Lalapho futhi zingedlula amatshumi amahlanu umuzi ngamunye. “Kodwa, ukomela!” ngumama ojayeke ukutsho njalo. “Udla ezizifeleyo kumbe ezicubayo. Baqinisele sibili ukuthi uMlimu ngeke akuphe konke.”

Usephelelwe manje uJamu, kasakwazi ukuthi athini. Usebhoda engalaneni yamaphane lapho uAnti agezisela khona imganu lembiza. Yakhiwa nguKhulu lengalane. Isentshonalanga, eduze lothango lomuzi. Ukubhodabhoda kwakhe kungikhumbuza iqhude nxa selizaluma isikhukhukazi. Ubona selikhuphe uphiko lwanganxanye, likhwenyeza

ngonyawo olulodwa lingathi lihlekela emphinjeni. Ukubobotheka kukaJamu kutshintshe kube yikunyenama lapho esithi jeqe, ethalaza ukuthi akulamuntu omdala ombonayo. Kulenja yami engezwayo, uBazangenzani. Ukwenza kukaJamu khathesi yikho xathu okuka Bazangenzani. Uyayathi thala thala. Angabona engabonwa muntu, nango eqonda embizeni eseziko, ayifuqe ngekhanda ithi kutu. Uzambona edobha iqatha elikhulu, asubelise umsila selimtshisile, ayelibeka phansi ukuthi liphole. UJamu uzama ukubamba isandla sikaAnti. Adlubulunde uAnti engathi izandla zika Jamu ziyatshisa. Amkhombe ngomunwe oqhuqhayo, ngapha esenza imisindo etshengisa ukuthi uzondile, ukhathele ngamanyala akhe la. Umngane wami uSipho wake wathi imisindo le ungathi yikukhala kwembuzi. Engakaqedi lakukhuluma, ngamfobha emakhaleni kwantshaza umungula. Phinde akhulume inyala lakhe leli. UJamu useswele lokuthi enzeni. Nango eqonda emzini wakhe.

UJamu ukhuluma loKhulu ngoAnti Mongi. Angazi ukuthi sebhakuluma kangaki ngalindaba. Yiyo kuphela abayiphethayo kulezinsuku. “Kumele sizame ngamandla wonke,” yikho uKhulu ahlala ekutshela uJamu, yena engekuza ikhanda. “Uyakunatha nje lokhu engikupha khona?” abuze uKhulu. Ingekuze ikhanda njengontulo indoda endala. “Kuhle-ke,” kutsho uKhulu, abesengikhangela athi, “Mtanomtanami, akulethe isawudo, lisekhitshini.”

Ngiphuma nje ekhitshini ngibone uJamu uyanqwetha, uya exhibeni lika Anti. UKhulu usemuva kwakhe. Athi ngokungena exhibeni uJamu, uKhulu ankilinge isikopela sesivalo ngocingo. Ngiyazi ukuthi uAnti uphakathi ngoba ngemiGqibelo umama labanye besiya eSabatheni yena uyayazihlalele exhibeni lakhe ethanyela, elungilungisa izinto, ethunga izigqoko eziqhaqhekileyo, kumbe ecambalele nje embhedeni. Eseqedile ukubopha nki umnyango ukhulu, ahaluzele esiyahlala phansi okomfana wesikolo osanda kuganga, engafuni kukhandwa ngutitsha.

Ngiyizwe imisindo le etshengisa ukuthi u Anti kakuthandi okwenzakalayo. Khonokho kuthi bhu! Kusazigqoko zitshaya umduli. Zwi futhi. Avuleke ngenkalakatha yomkhosi uAnti. UKhulu uphole okomuntu ongezwa lutho. Uhlezi uzidlela isibindi engathi ubunandi baso ubuzwa langendlebe. Ngigijime. Ngifike ngililahlele phambi kwakhe igabha lesawudo. “Kant’ uJamu umenzan’ uAnti?” Aphakamise amehlo, atshekise lekhandla okwesiphofu. “Utheni mtanomtanami?” nguye lowo. Ngiwuphinde umbuzo sengiklabalala ngoba sengisizwa ukugomela lokutshayeka emdulini lakuwodrobhu okwabantu abalwayo. Ngigijime ngiqonde exhibeni lika Anti, ukuthi ngithukulule ucingo uKhulu abophe ngalo. Ngingakafiki lasemnyango uKhulu angidonse ngekhola yeyembe. Umphimbo uvaleke

kancane. Abesesithi, “Umenza umfazi ozwayo. Woza sihlale phansi. Kuzaphela khathezi lokhu....” Engakaqedi akutshoyo uKhulu, isivalo kwatu, emgubazini. Nanso sindiza emoyeni okwesikhatshana andubana sithi bhu, phansi. Phezu kwaso kuloAnti loJamu. Ungathi zinkalakatha zabantwana ebezitshelela ngesikhukhukhu. UAnti ugqoke iphenti kuphela, layo isiqhaqhekile emaceleni. UJamu ibhulugwe lakhe libuthene enqagaleni. Into yakhe iqaphe okophondo lwembuzi. Avuke kuqala uAnti Mongi, abaleke ayezithela esiphaleni athule zwi. UJamu asale ekhweza ibhulugwe. Lanxa esebophe lebhanti, into yakhe yale iqaphile, kungani izabhoboza ibhulugwe. Elinye lamehlo akhe livuvukile. Akhafule igazi, anyikinyise amazinyo aphambili esizwa ukuthi awaxegi yini.

UKhulu wenwaya ikhanda lakhe eselisele lenwele ezimhlophe ezimbalwa. Engaqhubeka ngokwenwaya kwakhe lokhu, uzasala engasela ngitsho lolulodwa ngasikhatshana nje. Nango, eseqonda esiphaleni uJamu. Azwakale uKhulu: “Mekele okwamanje.”

Bazame ukubuyisela umgubazi emdulini. Unyomukile emdulini. Kusele kancane ukuthi uwele phansi. Usugobe okwesidakwa esiseduze lokuthi ga ngobuso phansi. Wale ukubuyela endaweni yawo umgubazi. Babone kungcono ukweyamisa isivalo emdulini. Bawukhangele umnyango lo osukhamisile. Kukhanye ukuthi uyabacaphula – kube engathi ubathethisa ngenkalakatha yenhlamba.

Izigqoko zika Anti zigcwele indawo yonke, engathi bekulesavunguzane exhibeni. Ikhobothi encane agcinela kuyo izigqoko zangaphakathi ilele ngomhlabulo, isivalo sivuleke sonke engani sithi “khange!” Imbodlela yevaselini ilele ngecele phezu kwepitikoti emnyama. Amanye amapitikoti, amabhodi lamaphenti lokhe kugoqwe kuhle noma sekungasekho endaweni yakho. UKhulu adobhe isigqoko sika Anti esilithanga athi kimi, “Umlandele esiphaleni umuphe isigqoko sakhe. Umtshele aphume. Akulamuntu ozamlimaza, sizama ukunceda yena thina.”

Kumnyama esiphaleni. Kulomnuko wotshani obusanda kufulela, lomnuko womuthi wokuthi amabele angaphehlwa, *iShumba*. Ugogo nguye oyifakileyo *iShumba*. Wathi umnuko wayo uzaphela ngemva kwamaviki amabili. Ekucineni komkhandlo kulekhuba lenkabi. Okukhanya sobala yimikhono yalo. Emaceleni omabili omkhandlo lo kulamawindi amancane esithela ngawo amabele. Ngiyakuthanda ukungena ngalamawindi nxa ngisamukela amabele ngiwayela phansi. Nxa ekhwela esiya phezulu amabele lami ngiyabe ngilokhe ngiqansa lawo. Ngikholisa khona ukuthi ayanwayizela ngaphansi kwenyawo nxa ngiwayathela. Sasiwathele aze afike ewindini. Okwakhathezi ngime ngilalelisise. Kuthule cwaka. Ngilunguze ewindini

lokuqala, ngibone nje ukuthi ngezake abelapho uAnti ngoba lapha kugcwele phamu. Enye ingxenye yesiphala igcwele umumbu. Ingxenye elenyawuthi ayigcwalanga kangako. Ngilunguza phakathi nje sengivele ngamuzwa ngomnuko uAnti. Ngiwavule amehlo. Akhifize kancane uAnti. Amehlo ami aqonde lapho okusuke khona lomsindo. Ngibone luvilibana ukuthi uzigoqile, ikhanda lisemadolweni. Usengathi ngumfanekiso wengane esesiswini sikanina, engawubona ebhukwini lesayensi. Ukumphosela isigqoko ngewindi kungaba yikungahloniphi. Ngingene ke ngewindi. Asamukele isigqoko kodwa asibeke eceleni kwakhe. Ngizame ukumbamba isandla. Angifuqe ngenkalakatha yamandla ngizithole sengiqethukile enyawuthini. Ngiphange ngiphume esiphaleni.

Ugogo kasamthethisi nje uKhulu! UJamu usehambile. “Thaba phela ukuthi umntanami usumenze umkhoba ohlala esiphaleni.”

“Khulumela phansi,” nguKhulu lowo.

“Ngithe, khupha umtanami esiphaleni wena haga lendoda!”

“Uthini kanti wena? Phakathi kwabantu bonke nguwe ongibiza ngelehaga? UMongi ngimthanda njengabo bonke abantwabami. Kuzothi wena nina okumele uyizwisise yonke lento, ufuna ukuthi afe elugebhezi nje? Khangela abantwabethu bonke. Amajaha athethe, alabantwana. Intombi lazo zendile, zilabantwana. Ngaphandle kukaSithabile osanda kutshiya umendo, lakho kungenxa yokwehluleka kwakho ukulaya abantwana. Yikho nje uSithabile elekhanda eligcwel’ izibungu.”

Usebambe iqolo manje ugogo, nxa egcizelela akutshoyo ikhanda litshoka liye phambili, liyemuva. “Abantwana bonke laba nguwe owabadingela abafazi lamadoda?”

“Ngumbuzo bani lowo?” abuze uKhulu abeseqhubeka, “Babengaludingi uncedo lwami. Bayezwa endlebeni, bayakhuluma. Pho-ke lumntwana ongelamlomo wokuzikhulumela, ongelandlebe zokuzwa, uthi isidalwa sikaMlimu lesi senzeni?”

“Kakutshelanga phambi kwethu sonke ukuthi kafuni kwenda? Kafuni ndoda, ngitsho loJamu wakho lo.”

“Wazini uMongi?”

“Njengami, uyazi ukuthi okufunayo zinkomo zikaJamu kuphela!” Atshibilike uGogo atshaye izinsinde kubhulane izidwaba. Uzonde uyaphuphuma! Azwakale engunguna, angabi khona ozwa ukuthi uthini. “Nozizwe,” amkhombe ngomunwe oqhaqhazelayo uKhulu, kodwa ngitsho ukuthi anyemukule uGogo, “Zibambe wena. Ungabonginyela ngomlomo lapha. Nxa uphisiwe hamb’ egangeni!” Atshitshe ngamandla uGogo. Izigwenxa lokuguga kumenza ahambe engathi lidada.

“Abafazi...” nguKhulu lowo. “Uyakubona ukuhlanya kukanyokokhulu? Woza sihlale ngaphansi kwegonde fanami, siqedise okuyinyama lokhu okusele emganwini.” Ngizidonse ngisiyahlala laye uKhulu. Lawakhe uKhulu alokhe esiyakhona esiphaleni, loba nje ekhangela ngecele.

Ngelanga elilandelayo aphume esiphaleni uAntiMongi. Ngidinge ngiswele ukuthi angabe ephume ebusuku kumbe ekuseni kakhulu. Ngimbone nangu ekuseni esethanyela iguma ngehlahla lomshekisane. Kathanyeli uyagwedla. Kusobala ukuthi uzonde udl’inja. Uthuli seluthe nki indawo yonke kodwa uqhubeka ethanyela. Angibone lapho engimi khona. Athi ngokungibona ame ukuthanyela, angiphakamisele isandla okomuntu ongifanisayo. Ngibobotheke, yena ngitsho.

Nangu uJamu futhi. UloKhulu, obabomncane ababili lomakhelwane wethu, uTimoti. Bakhulumela phansi. UJamu yisiyelele sibili! Angayiphakamisa imamba ngomsila efuna ukubona ukuthi ichamisele amangaki amaqanda. Uzimisele ukuzomzama uAnti Mongi futhi. Abatshele abangakithi ukuthi yiyo injongo yakhe leyo. Banqekuze amakhanda bevumelana laye. “Ngingathaba kakhulu,” nguKhulu ephendula uJamu. Aqhubeke athi, “Amadlozi angihlanekela sibili ekungipheni lumntwana. Kodwa angikholwa ukuthi angangixolela ngingamekela elugebhezi enje – ngingamekela alahlwe legundwane.”

“Ngiyazi sizaphumelela baba,” kutsho uJamu, “ubaba uSiwalu uthe kumele kube ngumfazi ongakazi indoda, njalo kumele kubelokunye okusabulima ngaye. Ungiphe lezihlahla. Ngilethemba lokuthi ngingazihlanganisa lalezi ongiphe zona, sizaphumelela kuphela.” USiwalu laye njengoKhulu, uhlala esemilonyeni yabantu. Abanye bathi uyinyagamthakathi. Ulemithi eqinileyo ayipha omama ukudlisa amadoda. Uthole indoda isiphonguba yisiyelele esigxoza indenda.

Ilanga alikaphumi. Kodwa usungenelisa ukubona izihlahla lezindlu. Konke kusemathunzi. Kulamadoda ami phambi kwendlu kaKhulu. Bakhulumela phansi okwabantu abahanqa umvundla osesikhundleni. Khonokho nampo betshitsha beqonde exhibeni likaAnti Mongi. Angatshoni emotsha isikhathi uJamu. Awuthuze ngenkalakatha yehlombe umnyango uvodlokele phakathi. Ngilalelisise. Angifuni kweqiwa ngitsho langumsindo owodwa uJamu esenza uAnti umfazi-fazi. Kube lobugudugudu endlini. Okunye ungathi yisuthukhesi ewayo. Awuhlabe umkhosi uAnti. Khonokho, ngizwe engathi nguKhulu othi, “Bamb’ unyawo lolo.” Kuthule. Ngemva kwesikhathi kugomele indoda engathi yinkunzi egwazwe ngomkhonto enhliziyweni.

Amadoda amane aphume exhibeni likaAnti. Bathi ukungibona amehlo abo boyi boyi. Ukuthi bawahlanganise lawami kube yinkani. Amehlo abo

ungathi ngakaBazangenzani esebanjwe etshontsha inyama. “Hawu, fanami, wavuka ekuseni kangaka yindaba?” abuze uKhulu. Kwale ukuthi ngimphendule. Sengitshelwe ngamazwi, sengiphelelwe. Ngibatshiye lapho, ngingabathalazi lokubathalaza.

Namuhla lilanga lokucina lekhefu lokuvalwa kwezikolo. Umama uthi ngingaqali ukuya eduze loAnti. Uselesikhathi engakhulumi lomuntu uAnti. Akasayi emfuleni, njalo kasaphekeli muntu. Usekhuluma yedwa, ajikijele abantu ngezinto. Kakhethi muntu. Lathi abantwana uyasijikijela. Usehlala ezondile. Usengohlala lengqamu ebukhali losungulo olude alulola lwacija okwesabekayo. Usungulo lolu ulubazele isibambo sesigodo.

“Ngezani izinto zonke lezi?” ngibuze umama.

“Ukuthi angalingi asondele uJamu,” aphenndule umama. UAnti wakho useyingozi. Ungaqali ukusondela kuye.”

Nangu uJamu. Uphinde weza lezinye izigqoko. Uthi ngezika Anti. Ezinye zakhona ngezichayileyo, ezigqokwa ngomama nxa bezithwele. “Okwamanje uzond’ udl’inja. Kafuni khona lokuthi ngimsondelele. Ndadakazi bani efuna ukugwaza uyise ngengqamu langosungulo? Kodwa ngileqiniso lokuthi umntwana angazalwa, ingqondo kaMongi izaphenduka. Ungakhathazeki, Jamu.” UJamu abobothেকে ngomlomo kantswebe. Bathi lokhe wezwa ukuthi uAnti uzithwele, wahle wayekela ukulwa. Khathesi uyanatha adakwe, ahleke ngengavula zakhe. Akulalutho kodwa olutshengisa ukuthi uAntiMongi uzithwele. Umama uthi isisu sokuqala asivamanga ukukhanya masinyane. Uthi kodwa uleqiniso lokuthi uAnti uzithwele ngoba konke okunye okutshengisa ukuthi umuntu uzithwele kwakukhona. Nanku phela wayehlanya lokuhlanya ekuseni.

Ngiyazi ukuthi lokhu engikwenzayo yikuhlanya sibili. Ngingene exhibeni lika Anti Mongi. Amadolo asetshayana, ngikhangele umnyango ukuthi kungabanzima, ngipuntshuke. Akhuphe ingqamu yakhe losungulo esikhwameni sefasikoti yakhe ebomvu. Ingqamu losungulo kuyacazimula. Ngilindele ukuthi ngithi phulukundlu ngingabona uAnti esiza kimi. Athi nxa ebona ukuthi yimi, abuyisele izikhali zakhe esikhwameni sefasikoti. Azame ukubobothেকে. Angibize ngesandla, ukuthi ngizohlala eceleni kwakhe. Loba nje ingqondo yami isithi ngingayi kuye, inyawo zenze okwazo, ngize ngihlale eceleni kwakhe. Angiphulule ikhanda abobothেকে. Ngikhombele esikhwameni sefasikoti lapho afihle khona izikhali zakhe. Ngichaye izandla ngizikhangelise phezulu. *Izikhali lezi ke?* Ngibuze futhi, *Ufuna ukubulala umuntu?* Umbuzo lo ucina ngokugijimisa umunwe wokukhomba entanyeni.

Ahleke ngomlomo kuphela. Amehlo awalalo uhleko lwensukwini. *Uyangesaba?* angibubuze. Ngingekuze ikhanda. Ngezandla aninele khatshana ukwesaba kwami.

Namhlanje ngithabile. Kodwa ngeke ngimtshele umama ukuthi bengisexhibeni lika Anti. LoKhulu ngezake ngimtshele ngoba engafuna ukungithuma lemilayezelo yakhe. Kukhona owangena endlini kaAnti yena ephumile, watshiya impahla ezazilethwe nguJamu. UAnti wazibutha zonke, wazithela ipharafini, wazitshisela phakathi laphakathi kweguma. Zatsha kwasala okungumlotshana.

Okwakhathesi ngibona sengathi ingqondo yakhe isibuya. Nangu phela uphekile namhlanje. Ukudla ukuphethe ngokhomane oluchayileyo. Ekhomaneni kulomganu kaKhulu owesigodo. Kulolimi lwenkomo emganwini. Yilo oluphekwa lufakwe emganwini lo olesiciko sawo. Kodwa uAnti uhamba ngendlela engingayizwisisiyo. Ungathi kukhona okungacacanga ngaye. Uza eqonde lapho engihlezi khona loKhulu. Uhamba ebabayila etanasa njengezinye zezigulane zikaKhulu, leziya ezilengulamakhwa. Abobotheke ngamandla uKhulu nxa uAnti esondela kithi. Buhlobe ubuso bukaKhulu lapho ebona umhlolo engiwubonayo lami. Izandla lengalo zika Anti kugcwele igazi. Elinye lilokhe lijuluka ngombala. Aguqe phambi kuka Khulu abeke ukhomane phansi. Ungathi ufuna ukubobotheka, ngendlela yakhe yakudala, ehlekela ngaphakathi ukuthi uKhulu uthanda ukudla kakhulu. Asukume, abuyele exhibeni lakhe ehamba ebabayila etanasa njengezigulane zikaKhulu ezilezinto ezibhebhayo ngobuhlungu phakathi kwemilenze.

Asibukulule umganu uKhulu. Emganwini kulento engathi ligundwane. Kodwa khona kulenyawo ezimbili lekhandla elikhulu. Kuphakathi kwamanzi ahlangele legazi. Kuzitshile kabili kathathu kuthi zwi. Phambi kwakho kulosungulo olude. Isibambo sosungulo sibomvu gebhu igazi. Ngemuva kwakho okuyinto lokhu kulengqamu leya uAnti ayetshona eyifihle efasikotini. Ungathi kuyibelethe lingqamu. Ngimtshiye ekhamise umlomo uKhulu. Angazi kumbe uyazibona impukane esezihlala entweni le engathi ligundwane elikhulu. Nxa engasavalanga umlomo masinyane, zizazithela lasemlonyeni wakhe.

Kulamapholisa amabili, eliyindoda lelingumfazi. Afuna ukwazi ukuthi kwenzakaleni izolo. Akhuluma loKhulu isikhathi eside. Ubunengi baleso sikhathi umdala unikina ikhanda kuphela, akhale ngabantu abathanda indaba zabanye. Amapholisa ayambuza ukuthi umuse ngaphi umntwana. Yena uthi

bekungasimntwana. Amapholisa afuna ukuzibonela ngawawo amehlo ukuthi liqiniso yini lelo. Bakugebhe okuyinto lokhuyana okungani ligundwane elikhulu. UKhulu ubekugqibele eceleni kwesibaya. Bathathe konke losungulo lengqamu, bakufake emgodleni weplastiki omnyama.

Ipholisa elingumfazi lifuna ukukhuluma loAnti Mongi, bebobabili kuphela. Umama amtshele umpholisa ukuthi uAnti kakhulumi, futhi kezwa endlebeni, uyisacuthe, yikho ekhuluma ngezandla. Ipholisa lithi lifuna ukwazi ukuthi into le abayigebhileyo bekungumntaka Anti na? Umama atolike umbuzo. UAnti ankekuze ikhanda. Abuze umpholisa ukuthi umntwana lo uphume njani esiswini sika Anti. Afuqe izandla zombili ezichayile uAnti eqondise empholiseni, esithi *Akungiyekele*. “Uyakwazi nje ukuthi angabotshwa? Umbuze.” Atolike umama, acine ngokuphambanisa ingalo zisiba ngu xa. Ankekuze ikhanda uAnti. “Uyayazi nje ijele? Uyakwazi ukuthi angabolela khona?” abuze umpholisa. Engakaqedi lokutolika umama, uAnti ankekuze ikhanda. Ubuso bakhe bujikeme okomuntu ovela khatshana, othe ngokufika wahlala phansi wanatha amanzi aqandelelayo wakholwa. “Sizadinga ingcitshi zokuhlola ingqondo zitsho ukuthi ingqondo zakhe zihlangene yini,” ngumpholisa lowo. Aqhubeke athi, “Uzafuna umtoliki. Uzamtolikela?” utsho ebuza umama ophanga athi kasoze enelise ngoba okunye kuyamehlula ukutolika. Umama abuze mina ukuthi ngingamtolikela yini uAnti. Hawu, ngizabatshela njani abantu abanjengompholisa lo? Abantu ababophe ubuso belengise lezankosi? Ngihle ngale masinyane ngithi kacele uGogo kumbe uKhulu. Angithi yibo vele abazali bakaAnti? Besengibuza yena uAnti ukuthi ufuna ukutolikelwa ngubani. Aqambe mina. Ahleke engahleki umpholisa ongumfazi athi umuntu omdala uzakubangcono. Ngimtolikele uAnti. Amhwaqele umpholisa, abe sesithi ufuna mina ngoba ngihlakaniphile futhi akusensuku zatshwala ngingabanga yindoda.

Iqiniso yikuthi angazilutho ngokuba yindoda, into ekhanya isizangehlela masinyane kangaka. Engikwaziyo yikuthi inyama sengizayiphuma. Phinde ngiyithinte! Kuzathatha isikhathi eside ukuthi ngibuye ngiyidle, nxa ngizayidla.

Lokhu lalokhuya-yimpilo leyo!

NoViolet Bulawayo

Ngenye ikuseni, unyoko ahlohlele isandla kubhodi yakhe ebomvu ayikolovela kudadewabo uNoma, eminyakeni emithathu edluleyo, ahwatshe itwenti dolazi. Imali yakhe ihlala kubhodi ngoba eyifihlela isigilamkhuba esinguyihlo esisepentshenini, ukwenzela ukuthi uyihlo angayifinyeleli abe sekuthuma esitolo ukuyathenga amaphakethi amabili egwayi leKingsgate, atshone enuka phu igwayi ngoba uliphaquza ilanga lonke. Akuqhubele leyo mali unyoko lephephabheki yako TM Hyper, athi yana koMaplanka uthenge ilofu-lehafu-wayithi-lephayinti-yochago-lweChimombe.

Ugqoke amapatapata akho alithanga ngokuphangisa (asexega ngoba uyihlo uyake ahlohlele inkalakatha zenyawo zakhe kuwo). Nguwe lowa uphaqazela uqonda koMaplanka. Kuthatha imizuzu elitshumi lane ukuya khona, eyisikhombisa nxa uqonqoselwe ukuthi uphangise, emihlanu lengxenye nxa kungunyoko okuthumileyo. Uhlangane lesalukazi esingunaMgcobha. Sesikhokhobele futhi sihlala sodwa kokuyindlwana kwamazenge ekucineni kwelayini yangakini. Kutshise, kuqande, kayiphumi emzimbeni ijesi yakhe ebomvu okwegazi. Uhlala ethwele ucingo lokulengisa impahla endaweni yokuthi ngabe uthwele udondolo. Ucabange ukuthi yikungapheleli lokhu. Ezinye izalukazi ziyadondolozela, yena uthwalana lamawaya.

Ayithi tshazi iphephabheki oyifumbethayo unaMgcobha athi Wena, zibun' ezinkulu, uyathengani? (utsho ngelizwi elincane, eliheleziswa yizikhwehlela ezibangelwa yikutshona ehlafuna igwayi lomlomo. Lokuphefumula sekunzima, ngosephumula lapha lalapho ekukhulumeni kwakhe kanti lomlomo unuka phu lona gwayi lomlomo). Uphendule uthi, Ngiyathenga ilofu-lehafu-wayithi-lephayinti-yochago-lweChimombe. Yena athi, Kuphela? Wena unqekuze ikhanda uthi, Ye, kuphela. Yena abesesithi, Ngitsho istokhu majarina, kumbe isani jemu, kumbe amaqanda kumbe okunye nje? Unikine ikhanda uthi, hayi, umama katshongo ukuthi ngithenge istokhu majarina, kumbe isani jemu, kumbe amaqanda kumbe okunye nje. Ubuza nje unaMgcobha ngoba uthanda ukuzogalila itiyi ngakini nxa

engaswela opheke ukudla kwekuseni okungcono. Umsthiye engunguna yedwa ehlabahlaba umoya ngewayu yakhe youkulengisa impahla.

Ekuqumeni ngeganga elingemva kwakoMaplanka uphose unyathele ikhondomu ebomvanyana esetshenzisiweyo. Ukhafule ngokwenyanya; amakhondomu asekwanyanyisa kanti usesemncane wawungela ndaba lawo. Ngalezo nsuku, wena lomngane wakho uAnesu lalicabanga ukuthi amakhondomu ngamabharoni loba nje ayebunjwe ngendlela engaqedakaliyo futhi iplastiki yawo yayicakile kuleyamabharoni eliwajayeleyo. Kwakumnyama kini ukuthi kanti amafuthanyana anukayo, aphakathi kwebharoni leli elingaqedakaliyo, ngawani. Lalingazihluphi. Laliwagezisa amafutha la empompini, liwavuthele, liwabophe ngentambo, lithabe libe manzi te ukuthi selithole izinto zokudlalisa.

Ngelinye ilanga unyoko wakuthola uphezu kwesihlahla *sejakharanda* esasingemva kwendlu yangakibo kaAnesu udlalisa amakhondomu-bharoni. Wagada wakulanda phezu wakubhalamba wakubhalamba waze wawa esihlahleni. Wehla wakubhalamba, wakubhalamba ibhanti lakhe elibomvu laze laqamuka. Wehluleka ukuhlala okwensuku ezimbili, izibunu zixathukile.

KoMaplanka kugcwele, kuyaxokozela. Abathengi bakhanya bezondele umthengisi olemphabanga lomncedisi wakhe omfitshane, otshona etubhule umlomo. Bobabili bami ngemuva kwekhawunta. Isiminyeminye vele uyasizonda, awukwazi lokuthi uzadlula njani ukuthi uyefika ekhawunteni. Ume emnyango uzame ukuthi ungakhangele isilima esithengisa amanyuz'phepha. Singakubona silomkhuba wokukhupha ulimi siludlalise sanyoka. Lakhathesi senzenjalo. Ulimi lwaso lubomvu gebhu ngoba besisidla ishebhethi ebomvu. Awukwazi ukuthi ukudlalisa ulimi lokhu kutshoni kodwa kusobala ukuthi kuyinhlamba, futhi ulesifiso sokuthi lesi silimandini siyekele into yaso yokudlalisa ulimi.

Ulahlise ngokuzenza obala inyuz'phepha (kanjalo, awuluboni lolu limi olwenyanyisayo), uwaphinde usawaphinda amabala amnyama amakhulu kupeji yokuqala uze uwazi ngekhandu, *Sudden Inflation Rocks the Country*. Uyawazi amanye wonke lamabala ngaphandle kwaleli eliphahlwe ngu 'sudden' lo 'rocks,' ngoba yinkalakatha yebala. Mhlawumbe usukugredi sikisi kumbe seveni, kumbe ususesekhendari uzabakwazi ukuthi litshoni.

Liphume elinye ixekana labantu abazondileyo (uMaplanka ubethusele ngokubiza amapholisa). Usithole isikhala sokuntshungubala uyephambili. Uqoqomele, ubeke phezu kwekhawunta exexebukayo imali oyifumbathe yatshwabhana, yaginqa. Uzwakale ngeliphezulu: Umam'uthe ngizotheng' ilofu-lehafu-wayithi.... Ungakaqedi lokutsho okufunayo, inkalakatha

enguMaplanka ihwabhe ithi imali yakho ishotile. Athi intengo yesinkwa lochago, layo yonke into kukhwelile sekufuneka imali enengi ukwedlula le olayo.

Ume usithi kumbe uMaplanka uzayithatha imali yakho akuphe letshintshi ngoba izinto lezi uzithenge ngetwenti izolo; kungehlulani ukuthi uthenge izinto ezifanayo ngetwenti namuhla? Ujame uthi kumbe uzamuzwa ethi ubesoma. Nki. Ume ngonyawo olulodwa njengeqhude, ngoba usudiniwe. Ulethemba lokuthi uMaplanka uyazisomela nje. Kodwa kadlali uMaplanka! Uyidobha akujikijele ngayo ebusweni imali yakho, athi uyithathe uyetshetshela ngayo, kumbe uyedinga eyinye yokwengezelela. Aqede ngokuthi ubomtshela unyoko afunde ama *fakheni* nyuz'phepha. Waze ngani ukuthi ngunyoko okuthumileyo hatshi uyihlo? Kuyini vele okufundwayo emanyuz'phepheni? Kuyini okuwenza abe *fakheni* ?

Athi ekubona ungaphethe lutho unyoko, asukume lapho abekorobha khona. Inkalakatha yezandla zakhe zibambe inqulu zakhe ezichithekayo, akhwaze: Wena mnyamana, usulahl' imali yami? Uzithulele, ukhangele isiketi sakhe esilithanga esilamatopotopo amnyama, sikhwinciwe emaceleni, umphetho usumanziswe ngamanzi okukorobha angcolileyo. Uwehlise amehlo aze athi ga emadolweni akhe amnyama tshu. Amnyama nje abika iminyaka leminyaka yokuguqa ekorobha phansi, efaka i*Cobra*, ebasa lomlilo.

Usalibele ulokhu ukhangele la madolo amnyama, akhwaze okwezulu unyoko: Ngithe uyenzeni imali yami, heh...? Uqhuqhe, ugagase, kungezwakali ukuthi uzama ukuthini lokuthi uthini. Impendulo ezwayo iphuma esekuqhaqhe ngamampama (kathathu – isihlathi senxele, pha! esokudla, pha-pha!) yikho ukuthi umtshela-ke kuhle ukuthi uMaplanka uthe imali iyashota. Inkulumbo kaMaplanka yokubala ama *fakheni* nyuz'phepha awuyithi vu lakuyithi vu.

Utshoni nxa usithi imali yami ishotile? Uyahlanya? Itwenti... heh? Itwenti-twenti sibili? Uziginye ezitshisayo inyembezi, ziphelele ngaphakathi. Uswathe nzo eminweni kanyoko embili esidlalela phambi kobuso bakho, igcizelela ubu twenti bemali yakhe. Uyazazela ungatshelwanga ukuthi ungatshedi lapho omi khona, unyoko eholoba eqonda endlini yakhe yokulala, lapho atshayelela isivalo ingani sizakuwa lomgubazi. Ngemva kwemizuzwana aphume esengumfula othwala lezigodo, usegqoke iqhiye ebomvu lezicathulo zikayihlo ezimnyama, *amamokhasini*. Zinkulu lezi zicathulo, inyawo zakhe ziyahutshuzela. Lakhathesi awudingi kutshelwa ukuthi sokuhanjwa – uyazazela njalo uyazibonela. Ulandele emva njengomsila, amapatapata akho epatazela okukunengayo.

Azibonele nje lingena esitolo lonyoko uMaplanka ukuthi unyoko uza okwenkunzi ehlanyayo engathintwa mpondo. Kusobala kuMaplanka ukuthi unyoko kafani labanye abantu atshona ebatshingela. Aphange abhode phambi kwekhawunta axhawule unyoko isandla. Engakatsho lokuthi ulandeni, amtshale (ngezwi eliphansi, elizothileyo hatshi ukuhwabha akwenze kuwe) ukuthi uHulumende uvuke ekhweze intengo yokudla lephethro, layo yonke into ingaka. Akhombele kusilima samanyuz'phepha athi: Nankuya, kuse manyuz'phepheni.

Indlela uMaplanka athi kuse manyuz'phepheni ngayo, ungathi lawo manyuz'phepha azakuthi, Ye, liqiniso lelo, nanku kubhaliwe! Unyoko akhamise umlomo okwenhlalayenza nxa ezahwatsha izibozi ngomlolo esithi, Uyapentsha mgodoyi! Engakatsho njalo, uMaplanka aqhubeke, Lokhu ngokuncane kwakhona. Okuzayo kuleli lizwe kukhulu. Kufuna uyise kaJesu ngokwakhe.

Kwabayikuqala kokuwa kwezinto, zicacadeka zisiba yizicucu. Khonokho nje intengo yezinto yaqonga kwangabambeki lutho. Kwangabi lalutho emashelufini esitolo sikaMaplanka lakwezinye izitolo. Izitolo kwabayizitolo ngebizo nje, phakathi kutshaya ibhungayezi. Kwabayikumotsha isikhathi ukuya ezitolo. Ungaze uzithole izinto, ungazithenga ngani?

Amanzi lamagetsi sekuvalwa ngezikhathi ezithile zelanga. Yikho nje amanzi okunatha aseginwa enkonxeni enkulu kuthi nxa ligeza, ligeze masinyane ekuseni ngeshawa. Ku TV, sekuhlala kulendoda yekhiwa enhle engathi ngumfazi, lenwele zayo zinde njengezabafazi (yiyo phela indoda ehluleka ukubiza u Zimbabwe kuhle, ithi *Zeembaymbey*). Uzayizwa isithi, *thih whorl cowntry ohf Zeembaymbey eaze forwced toh tayk drahtsic steyps toh conseyrve pohwer aynd ihts seetyzens kneeyd toh cohperate*. Uzibuze ukuthi kanti *ipohwer* yini sibili? Ayisiyo nje esetshenziswayo nxa kutshaywa umuntu? Yini *iwhorl country*? Kulelizwe eliyihafu yini kwenye indawo?

Wena lodadewenu uRose alisayi esikolo ngoba iskulufizi sesidula kakhulu. Umnewenu uVulindlela nguye kuphela osesiya esikolo. Uyihlo uthi kungcono uVu kube nguye oya esikolo ngoba ngumfana. Angaqeda ukufunda uzagcina imuli yonke. Wena loRose njengamankaza lizakwenda ngelinye ilanga liyenothisa ezinye imuli ngokufunda kwenu lokhu; linothise abantu abangakhiphanga yona isenti elesikhala ekulifundiseni. Ufuna ukumbuza uyihlo ukuthi njengoba uVu eyimphuqa nje, ehlala evala iklassi, uzayinceda njani imuli, kodwa uzithulele ngoba awungeke ubuze uyihlo imibuzo ezaveza amaphutha akhe.

Ngemva kwalokho uVu aye esikolo okwesikhathi esingatsho lutho. Nango ebaleka labangane bakhe uKhuluza, uMafana loBhari betshaya

idabulaphu besiya eGoli. Wonke umuntu ngosesiya eGoli. Atshiye incwadi uVu, ethembisa ukuthi izinto zingabangcono uzaphenduka. Wena lo *Rose* likhale ezimathonsi ngoba ulitshiyele inkalakatha yesizungu, futhi ulitshiye esikhaleni. Ngubani khathesi ozatshaya inhlikibonda enguJabu etshona isithi, *psssssssss, hey sexseeeey*, nxa lidludla phambi kwendlu yangakibo? Akhale unyoko ngoba umtanakhe usehambile njalo kalaqiniso lokuthi uzaphila njani elizweni elingasi lakubo. Akulamuntu ongaziyo ukuthi iGoli iyingozi. Angithi bayatsho ukuthi ikharadi elingu Bigboy baliphosa ngewindi livela emqongweni weflathi eGoli lapho. Umtaka MaDlamini, uTichaona angithi bamdubula khonale?

Uyihlo kamkhaleli uVu ngoba mhlawumbe kuyazila ukuthi indoda ikhale. Abantu bazakuthini nxa bebona inyembezi zendoda endala? Athule-ke uyihlo, ubuso bungathi thiki, okwejesi ebomvu esanda kwelukwa, aginye ilitshe. Buthi ubuso bakhe sebutshengisa impilo, kube yikukhafula intuthu yegwayi lamahlamvu epopo, lokuluma umlomo wangaphansi ngethemba lokuthi uVu uzafika eGoli aphumelele abesemthumela igwayi le *Pall Mall*.

Angakwaziyo uyihlo yikuthi akulaza *Pall Mall* azayithola. Kungakabi nsuku ngaki betshaye idabulaphu oVu, besamangaliswa yisiphithiphithini sezitiridi zeGoli, uVu engakawuhotshi kangaki umoya walendawo, ugwazwa kasevini yigenge yabafana asebediniwe ngabantu abanjengoVu abafika eGoli bathathe izinto okumele kube ngezabantu balapha. Bamtshiye elele estridini uVu, umphefumulo wakhe usobela okomoya uphuma kancane kancane kukhondomu elilesikhala. Kufike ipholisa elilezigwenxa lithole uVu ephunyukwa yimpilo, limbuze ukuthi uvela ngaphi. UVu aphen- dule ehitshwa ligazi eliphuma ngomlomo athi, *Zeembaymbey*. Abe ngumuntu ongaziwayo, aswele lozafuna isidumbu sakhe, abeselahlwa labanye abanjengaye, godilinye.

Uyihlo uvuka ekuseni nsuku zonke athi *fack the fackin' gavment*, ngoba kakuthandi ukubhema amahlamvu epopo. Njengoba uyihlo engasenelisi ukuthenga igwayi, unyoko ucabanga ukuthi usezabangcono. Ukubhema kumenza akhwehlele engathi uzakhwehlele lezicucu zamaphaphu. Unyoko uhlezi emtshela ukuthi kayekele igwayi lakhe leli, kodwa yena kahleki ngalo, uliphaquza ngamandla. Unyoko ulethemba lokuthi njengoba uyihlo engasabhemi i *Kingsgate*, ukukhwehlele kungehlukana laye ngendlela amanqe atshiyana lenyamazana esithe khwatshu-khwatshu isila ekufeni, ayedinga esizakuthi di phansi. Angakwaziyo unyoko yikuthi uphepha lukayihlo lulebizo, luthiwa yimvukuzane yamaphaphu njalo imvukuzane le isitshaye yavuthuza amaphaphu lesibindi, langaphansi kwenkaba, yikho nje ukungabhemi kwakhe akusoze kusize lutho.

Kuthi mzwana inyoka kayihlo eyimvukuzane ikhetha ukuphuma emlindini wayo, mhlawumbe ngoba isidle yaqeda konke okungadliwa emzimbeni wakhe, ithole amanesi ekhalele umsebenzi, ekustrayikhi. Ngasikhatshana nje, uyihlo aphangethe adlule kulomhlaba, njengephepha litshiswa ngumlilo. Umakhelwane olomusa alithwale lonke ngomkhehlekwakhe wakhe we Pijothi 404, lisiya eMpilo. Lithi lifika khona liqagwe yinkalakatha yelayini egobe kanenginengi okwenkalakatha yenyoka. Banengi abantu abamileyo nje, befuthelwa, bephekwa lilanga, kodwa balinde ngesineke esimangalisayo. Vele ungenzani ngaphandle kokuthi ume nje, ufuthelwe, uphekwe lilanga, ubekezele? Kungene abanye wena ungangeni esibhedlela ngoba abantwana abavunyelwa phakathi (ngoba? awukwazi). Usale ke phandle, ulinde usalinda. Kuze kuthi ungasazi, usudiniwe ukubala ubuso bonke obudanileyo, obalindeleyo baphume. Kodwa abalaye uyihlo. Unyoko sekungathi kukhona okumsindayo emahlombe. Kungathi ungene esibhedlela waphuma eseluphele. Uhamba edonsa inyawo. Ugqoke *amamokhasini* kayihlo. Ame phambi kwakho. Akukhangele engathi kakaze akubone. Ubuso bakhe buphekekile, futhi kakutsheli lutho. Evele engakutshela lutho ukuthi ungubani? Ungumntwana nje, futhi abadala abatsheli abantwana into zabadala.

Kube nguRose (ovunyelweyo ukungena ngoba mude, ulamabele noma nje uRose engamdala) okunyenyezela ukuthi uyihlo ulalisiwe. Aqhubeke, ekholisa ukuthi uqakathekile kulawe, athi futhi bamfake idriphu le-ok'sijini. Usuhawukela uRose ngoba yena uyathola ithuba lokuma akhulume amabala akhulunywa ngabadala wena uvale umlomo ngci, ulalele njengosane. Ufise kakhulu ukuthi ngabe lawe bakwekelile wangena, hatshi ukuthi uyebona uyihlo (phela usuhlale laye impilo yakho yonke futhi uyazi ukuthi ukhangeleka kanjani, unuka kanjani) kodwa ngoba ufuna ukubona idriphu le-ok'sijini.

Awusoze wafa wabona ukuthi idriphu le-ok'sijini yizinto ezinjani ngoba uyihlo ufa ngalobobusuku obude. Amagetsi ahambe. Isibhedlela asilamali yokuthenga ijenaretha. Ngaleyo ndlela, kwehlule-ke ukuthi idriphu le-ok'sijini okubambe impilo kayihlo ngomnxeba, kuqhubeke kusebenza. Kuvele akulamuntu ongenzani ngoba angithi amanesi akustrayikhi. Afe ngalolohlobo uyihlo, impilo yakhe iphume kancane santuthu yomhlanga wegwayi ophume ku 20 *Kingsgate* ethengwe koMaplanka nge \$3600.

Uthi usizwa ukuthi uyihlo ufile, uphelelwe ngoba akulamuntu omaziyo owafayo futhi loAnesu owakutshela yonke into oyaziyo kazange akutshela ukuthi nxa ungafelwa ngubaba wenzani. Kuze kuthi dlwe ukuthi wenzeni lapho ubona abantu abakhalayo, ukuthi kumele ukhale inyembezi

zeqiniso. Unyoko uyasilawula isililo. Ugqoke okumnyama kusukela ekhanda kusiya enyaweni. Ucabange ukuthi izigqoko ezimnyama ziyamfanela ngenxa yejwabu lakhe elimpofana. Yisimanga ukumbona ekhala kanje, uze ufise lokuthinta inyembezi zakhe. Umkhangele, uzibuze ukuthi kambe inyembezi zomfazi omude olezinqe ezichithekayo, lamadolo amnyama tshu, ovutha amalangabi emehlweni, lelizwi elikhwaza okwezulu, zingafana lezakho ozikhala nxa ekubhalamba ngebhanti lakhe lesikhumba elibomvu?

URose laye uphethe uyakhala. Usekhanya eqakathekile ngeqhiye emnyama enza akhanye njengomfazi omdala, hatshi inkazana. Kungani engakudingelanga iqhiye lawe ukuthi ukhangeleke njengomfazi omdala? Uzibuze ukuthi ngabe umnewenu uVulindlela ukhona, ngabe yena wenzani? Ubezakhala? Akhale njengendoda? Kanti wona amadoda vele akhala njani, njengoba engavunyelwa ukwehlisa inyembezi?

Zize ngobunengi izihlobo emfeni kayihlo. Ezinye awuzazi, ezinye uyazazi, ezinye uyazithanda, ezinye awuzithandi. Imfa ijayeke ukuthatha amalanga amathathu kumbe amane, kodwa ekayihlo ithatha elilodwa kuphela ngoba abantu lizabaphani? Phezu kwalokho amanzi avalwa isikhathi eside lamagetsi ayacitshwacitshwa. Akungeke kube lemfa ezwayo. Izihlobo zakho ziqoqa imali zithengele uyihlo okulibhokisi okunguzozo, okutshiphileyo. Akumelanga ubone isidumbu ngoba ungumntwana. Wonke umuntu akhohlwe ukutshela wena loRose ukuthi nxa sekubonwa isidumbu, lingezi. Uwuxhume lawe umzila wabantu abayabona isidumbu, ulandele lawe uyesibona.

Awukaze umbone uyihlo enje. Uthi umbona elele ebhokisini kanje, ecece engathi uya emtshadweni, uzibonele ukuthi inhle lindoda. Ubuso bakhe buthule, buzothile, kahwaqanga okomuntu ozibuza ukuthi *iKingsgate* uzayithola ngaphi, langayiphi imali. Umlomo wakhe uyaqala ukuwubona uvalekile ungathunquzi ntuthu yegwayi njengenhlayenza.

Bathi bonke abantu sebebuyele lapho abavela khona, kusale amadoda akibo kayihlo, uzwe ufikelwa yikwesaba okukhulu. Mhlawumbe yikuthi batshona bebophe inhlonzi, bengabobotheki lakubobotheka. Bakhuluma ngemfa kayihlo, bathi bayasola. UsaVu ubengafa emncane kangaka? Engakayibambi iminyaka engamatshumi amahlanu? Kwenzeke njani lokho? Ayikho enye ingcazelo ngaphandle kwalokho abatshona bekutsho. Ngunyoko kuphela. Bathi kathath'unyawo. Ungumfazi omubi, futhi kakwazi lokondla abantwana. Ingaphi indlalifa yalapha ekhaya? Kayixotshelanga eGoli esenzela ukusala esidla ilifa, ethatha lendlu, esebulele uyihlo ngemithi yakhe ayemfakela yona ekudleni?

Unyoko kuthiwe kabophe okungokwakhe aphume aphele lapha endlini ngoba uyihlomncane, uMandla, nguyeye ozahlala endlini, kulandelwa

amasiko. Wena lo Rose (lina lizahlala endlini lapha ngoba gubani ongakwaziyo ukuthi abantwana ngabomndeni wendoda?) limi ewindini, lisizwa lesisigwebo sikanyoko. Limbone unyoko, uhlezi phansi esamendeni, utshekise ikhanda, ungathi lilanga litshona. Ubhekane lamadoda amanengi, ahlezi ezitulweni njengabomantshi. Kuloyihlomkhulu, obabomncane labazawakhe, labanye ongabazi kuhle.

Likhupha inhlanzi emanzini. Lixaba isibomvu sangakini ngesikhathi unyoko esetshata isuthukhesi yakhe emnyama, edudulwa endlini okomkhuhlane omubi. Utshiya yonke imbali yakhe emva: ubevuka nsuku zonke ngabo sikisi ekuseni, athanyele, akorobhe afake ipholishi ye*Cobra*, abe seshayina eguqe ngamadolo, abesephuma esiyathanyela phandle eyadini. Nsuku zonke ubepheka ekhitshini. Ntambama achele izindlu zonke ngamanzi athandazelwe ngamapostoli, engakayi lala. Abantwabakhe abathathu ubakhulisele kuyonale indlu, etshaya ngedolo phansi nxa esipha umkakhe (abemzondela ukubhema) amanzi okugeza izandla ngesikhathi sokudla. Izibusiso zakhe, amathemba akhe, lamaphupho – konke lokhu ukubalise esendlini le, aseiyitshiya.

Yiyo imbali kanyoko leyo. Konke lokhu akusatsho lutho ngoba wayezithembise izinto ezikulendlu eyayivele ingasiyakhe, kusukela lanini. Yilelilanga lawe ohle ufunde ukuthi abafazi abalani empilweni. Yikuphuma nje endlini kayihlo usiya kweyomkakho, akukho okubiza wena. Abafazi bayafana nje lelanga eliphuma likhudumeze yonke into, lijabulise yonke into, liphe abantu amandla nsuku zonke; lithi lisiya ekutshoneni kunina, angabikhona loyedwa olibongayo. Liphuma linqunu lize liyekunina lokhe linjalo. Ubabomncane uMandla ujame emnyango ukuze abone ukuthi unyoko kaphumi layiloba yini yalapha ekhaya, okuyingxenye yembali yakhe. Uyazi ukuthi ngamabele akhe amakhulu, unyoko angenelisa ukutshwathika akufunayo ebhodini yakhe.

Nguwe lowa ewindini, ukhangele unyoko elandela uSibhizi Road, engathalazi emuva ukuthi akubhabhayise, noma ukuthi ayivalelise indlu abehleli kiyo iminyaka yonke le. Esetsholobele, nguwe lowa usiya zibuka esibukweni. Umangale ubona ukuthi ufuze uyihlo. Ubuya ufane loyihlomncane uMandla, loyihlo'mkhulu, labo bonke oyihlo abancane! Awufani ngitsho lakancane lonyoko!

Uziduduze ngokuthi ngelinye ilanga usukhulile uzamdinga uze umthole unyoko, uhlale laye. Uwulume umlolo wangaphansi uqinisa lesi sithembiso njalo ulethemba lokumbona unyoko ngelinye ilanga. Umdonse usamdonsa udonkana wengubo omembethayo usithi mhlawumbe ungathola ubuthongo. Bale. Uthi lapho ujumeka, uphuphe uyihlo ekwelabafileyo, ekumemeza esithi woza legwayi lakhe.

Emva kweminyaka ethize, uzamthungatha uze umthole unyoko. Uthabe ubemanzi te. Kodwa yena akwamukele engathi ukuninela khatshana, engathi wamukela umuntu aqala ukumbona. Ugqoke *amamokhasini* endoda yakhe entsha (wona amlingana ngcono kulalawana ayengakayihlo ayehutshuzela ngawo), ukhuluma ngelizwi elitsha labantwabakhe abatsha. Ukukhangele okungabantwana. Kulalokhu okungezwayo okungumfana okuthiwa nguTawanda. Kuzoba lalokhu okuncane, okuyinkazana okulenhlonihloni. Khona kuthiwa nguThandiwe. Ikungene enkulu inzondo usukubona sobala ukuthi okungabantwana lokhu sekwakutshontshela unyoko. Uhawukele ufisa ukuthi ngabe nguwe osendaweni yabo.

Athi ungumtakadadewabo unyoko, esetshela indoda yakhe le entsha. Akubingelele lowo baba ecatshe ngemva kwenkalakatha yeyezi lentuthu yegwayi. Kazihluphi langebizo lakho. Selilodwa, ngelipholileyo ongakaze ulizwe elisebenzisa, unyoko athi akasenguye nyoko. Lokhu kungenxa yokuthi usengumfazi wenye indoda, njalo leyondoda ayisoze ivume ukuhlala lomntwana wenye indoda. Acine ngokukuqhuba ekusa egedeni, ekubambe isandla njengelanga lokuqala usiya ekhreshi, akukhangele ugada ibhasi ngemva kokuba ekucelile ukuthi ungaphindi uphenduke lapha.

Uhlangana loGivemore ku Main Street usuleminyaka elitshumi lemine elengxenye. Uthengisa amaqanda aphekiweyo asenditshini emhlophe yokugezela izandla, oyidengezela kalula ekhanda. Uyazitshila lapho uchapha imigwaqo okomfazi omdala, ujika izinqe, kwesinye isikhathi ubizela engathi uyahlabela, amaqand' amaqand' amaqand' amaqanda, kumbe uqumela usithi qandaaaaa. Ekuqaleni awuzange uyithande ngitsho indaba yokuthengisa, kodwa kwakuyiyo kuphela indlela yokuzisiza ngoba uyihlomncane uMandla wayengathengi kudla, ngitsho; imali yakhe yayiphelela etshwaleni, yikho nje ukuthi uze uthengise amaqanda.

Uzihambela ngo Seventh Avenue, ume lapha lalapho, phambi kwamawindi ubuka izigqoko ezinhle ezigqokwe ngodoli abasemawindini. Usesemncane wawuthi ungangena edolobheni lonyoko, ubobothেকে, ubhabhayise odoli laba ngoba ucabanga ukuthi ngabantu. Khathesi usukhulile awubabhabhayisi, ubuka izigqoko zabo kuphela, uzibuze ukuthi kambe uzakufa wazigqoka izigqoko ezinje? Mhlawumbe kwaba kuhle ukuthi uRose wabaleka ekhaya (ngoba esithi ubabomncane uMandla wayefuna ukumbamba ngamandla ukwenza izinto ezimbi), walandela uVu eGoli, watshiya izigqoko zakhe ezinengi (esezikulingana khathesi ngoba usumude). Kungasabanga njalo, ngabe ugqokani khathesi?

Umi ekhoneneni ubuka isikipa esibhalwe *hello kitty* ewindini lesitolo. Thutshu umama okhanya ephitshekile. Ubelethe umntwana, athi, yimalini?

Wena uthi yi \$1000. Isandla sakhe sitshone kubhodi ebomvu, sikhwathaze sisakhwathaza sizesiphume lehenki ebotshe mfi. Ayithukulule esebenzisa amazinyo akhe alithanga ngokungaxujwa. Athi ekhothama ukuthi alume kakhulu ihenki yakhe, uthi tshazi umntwana osemhlane. Ulobuso obuhle njalo obuzothileyo. Kukukhumbuze ubuso bukayihlo esebhokisini, engakayingcwatshwa.

Kube yisimanga ukuthi umntwana lo kakhali ngani khona kulomhogoyi othi vinqovinqo ungena emakhaleni akhe. Ukuthi kasizwa lesisibungu? Usucabanga ukuthi uwulabhulele khatshana umhogoyi, unina womntwana ame aqonde, ubuso bomntwana bunyamalale. Uphange ukhohlwe ngakho lokhu usubala imali umama lo ayiphosela esandleni sakho engathi yisithelo esibolileyo, \$1000. Umuphe isawudo eligoqelwe ngesiqephu senyuz'phepha esilomfanekiso kaMongameli welizwe. Khonokho ahudule inyawo umama lo, ungakambongi lokumbonga.

Ume umbukele umama lo eseqa umgwaqo, engazihluphi ngitsho lokulindela irobhothi ukuthi libeluhlaza. Nango ezithela esizibeni semota ezimvikayo zisiyale lale. Kukhale bhureki, thaya, huta. Ubambe lomnuko wethaya. Iphume inhlamba, futseki, nja mgodoyi. Ngizakubulala wena wule. Umzwele umfazi obelethe umntwana uze uphose uwise inditshi yamaqanda. Ngasikhathi sinye nantu uvava olumnyama lusima eduze lawe, umdala olempabanga ehlise iwindi.

Kukwehlule ukuba ngowokuqala ukufika emoteni le. Kudala kutshompoke kwakuqalela okungabafana okuthengisa lapha emgwaqweni. Sokuyihahabela imali yomdala. Batshaya amakhwelo, bayaxokozela, lowo lalowo efuna indonda yempabanga ithenge kuye. Sokuyibu thenga kimi, thenga ngapha! Akusaqedakali. Nank' umumb' ovel' eplazini *straight!* Hawuuu, Bhoza, thenga phela inhlanzi ezifrayiweyo, *fresh from* es'bhakabhakeni! Kodwa indoda ibaninele khatshana abafana okomuntu ongafuni lutho kubo.

Umangale lindoda isikumemeza ibuye ikubize langomunwe. Ubeleqiniso lokuthi iphambanisile, ikufanisa lomunye umuntu ngoba ithi ungu*Sunrise*. Ozaphanga ukufunde yikuthi indoda le kayiphambanisanga nxa ikubiza isithi ungu*Sunrise* ngoba estridini ungaphiwa yiloba yiliphi ibizo. Abangakwaziyo bangakuthi unguMaqanda kumbe Sawudo. Uzabuye ukwazi njalo ukuthi lubaba kalandaba lamaqanda akho (noma nje ezawathenga wonke ngemali entsha, engakasebenzi). Kukhona olakho akufunayo loba wena ungazi ukuthi ulakho.

Sunrise. Uzabakwazi izinto ezinengi obungazazi lapho lindoda (elingana loyihlo, efuna uyibize ngelokuzalwa – Givemore) isikuqedile ukuhlupheka

kwakho kokuthengisa amaqanda aphekiweyo. Izakupha inqwaba yemali, izipho kube yinto yansuku zonke; kube sengathi ubona wena wedwa emhlabeni. Uzaphelelwa ukuthi ugezephi, ugegedeke, uqhuqhe ngenxa yesalamusi owawungazi ukuthi ulalo, elenza indoda endala ikuthengele inqwaba yezinto ezidulayo ungazange utsho ngitsho elilodwa.

Sunrise. Uzahlubula njengenyoka ihlubula isikhumba esidala isala ngesitsha. Uzakukhupha esihogweni sesitaladeni esilezibi ezinukayo, ilanga elixabayo labafana abangezwayo. Uzakubhadalela irenti yekamelo elilodwa esabhabha seBudapest ngoba esazi ukuthi uyihlomncane okugcinileyo (ohlala edakiwe) ngelinye ilanga uzafika endlini edakiwe acabange ukuthi awusimtakamnewabo, ungenye nje inkazana okuthiwa ngunkazana.

Sunrise. Mhla uGivemore esima ukukubiza ngelika *Sunrise*, uzakubiza ngelika *Sunset*. Yilo futhi ilanga ozakhula ngalo, utshiye ubuntwana. Uzakuphathela amaluba abomvu letshokoletshi oyithandayo, elamabala abhalwe ngesikhesivi esingajayelekanga, ongenelisiyo ukusibala. Uzaqala empilweni yakho ukubona indoda enqunu, uqhuqhe ngokwesaba langokumangala ukuthi liqiniso – indoda ilento elengayo phakathi kwemilenze, lapho wena ongelalutho khona.

Sunset. Uzaqala ngokwethuka, ngemva kwalokho uphelelwe into isiphakama okwesamboko, ime mpo, uzibuze ukuthi liqiniso, kumbe ubona izinto. Usadidene ingqondo, uGivemore athi uzakutshengisa ukuthi isamboko lesi ngesani. Ukutshengisa kwakhona akufani lokutshengisa kwansuku zonke, ngamehlo. Akufani njenganxa umuntu ekhombela athi, le yinkomitshi, lesi yisipunu, nansi isitofu, nansi indoda ehlanyayo, ibizo layo nguRobert. Ayisikho lokho. Ukutshengisa kwakhona kuqala ngo Givemore ekunqunula, kucina ngawe ulele waqethuka, phakathi kwemilenze kubuhlungu, kutshotshozela.

Sunset. Ngelanga elilandelayo uGivemore akuphe inqwaba yemali ukuthi uthenge okufunayo. Awukaze uyibone imali enengi kangaka empilweni yakho. Uthithibale, uhlahle amehlo ukhangele amamiliyoni. Ingqondo ntsi. Awukwazi lokuthi vele uzathengani. Uzitshele kodwa ukuthi nxa ubuhlungu bokutshengiswa bucina ngaloluhlobo, uzimisele ukukuphinda futhi ukutshengiswa. Ngasikhathi sinye uthabe ufe, ngoba uGivemore esithi uzakuthatha ubengumkakhe masinyane.

Sunset. Usuwubona lomtshado wakho. Wonke umuntu uzakuhawukela usungumakoti ogqoke esimhlophe leveyili ende. Uzazitshila, ugqoke izicathulo ezinjengezika Sindirela, phansi kuhazwe amarozi abomvu (abomvu ukwedlula ijesi kaNaMgcobha), uzandiza ingani awusanyatheli phansi, phakathi laphakathi kwabakhaphi ababili abayabe begqoke

ezilithanga, ezihuba phansi! Uyabe ungumtshado omangalisayo, okudanisayo kube yikuthi unyoko, uyihlo, uVu lo Rose bayabe bengekho ukuthi badakaze irayisi letshikheni lamasaladi, banathe iSprite leFanta lotshwala, beziqhenya ngawe.

Sunset. Usuthabile ngamandla usuthola ukuthi ngokuya kwesikhathi into owayitshengiswa nguGivemore, ayibuhlungu ngitsho. Kubamnandi! Ubunandi obutsha kuwe. Lanxa uGivemore ekuqethula embhedeni kumbe ekukhothamisa, usukhohliwe ukuthi kwakekwaba buhlungu ukwenza lokhu. Usufunda ukuzivula ngedlela ayithandayo uGivemore, kuthi nxa ekhefuzela endlebeni zakho ebophe ubuso esemubi, elume lomlomo, wenze iloba yini emkholisisayo, enza abobotheke nxa eseqedile.

Sunset. Ngelinye ilanga sekusele inyanga ezintathu ukuthi ube leminyaka elitshumi lanhlanu, usulensuku ezithize uhlanza ekuseni, lamathambo akho echobekile, uye esibhedlela ngoba awukuzwisisi okwenzakala kuwe. Ekuqaleni wawusithi kuzaziphelela, kodwa usukhathazekile ngoba awukhulanga ugulagula. Awumtsheli uGivemore ngoba awufuni kumhlupha. Kukhona vele okukutshela ukuthi kafuni kuhlutshwa. Nxa usungumkakhe, engxenye yikho ongaqala khona ukumhlupha.

Sunset. Isiminengi iminyaka, kusukela ngelanga lizelithwalele uyihlo esibhedlea wafika wafa. Wethuke usunanzelela ukuthi esibhedlela ungasila kumbe ufe. Uzibuze, ugqoka ibhodi yakho ebomvu ukuthi lawe bazakufaka idiriphu le-ok'sijini njengoyihlo? Ungalaliswa njengoyihlo, amagetsi awasoze ahambe ebusuku?

Sunset. Usalukazi kanesi olomzimba omncane, ogungubeleyo jengengwegwe yewayila yokulengisa impahla awavule amehlo ekhangela ikhadi lakho (uthe ungena wakugqolozelela kanje ngewindi waze wangena emkhandlweni oqonda kuye, ebona ugqoke ijini ebambayo lesikipa esingela mikhono esitshiya isibhono phandle, amabele elidundulu, evele kancane phezulu). Usehle wakhupha izinto zokukuhlola ukuthi ulesisu yini ngoba uthe ekukhangela wahle wazi ukuthi ulandeni. Usekwazi lokuthi uzakuthini kuwe, ngezwi elinjani.

Sunset. Kudala unesi ekwenza lokhu, yikho nje ekwazi ngokumangala okuzaba sebusweni bakho, kulandelwe luvalo, lona oluzaphuphuma sachago olubile embizeni lwachithekela emalahleni. Uyakwazi ukuthi uzaphuma ingqondo isisangene. Noma engazi ukuthi uzakwenza nini, uyazi ukuthi uzakwenzani nxa usukwazi ukuthi ulesisu.

Sunset. Ngemva kweviki uzithole uphakathi kokuyindlwana kukanaMgcobha okwamazenge, ulande ukuzokhipha isisu. Umdinge

elokitshini owawuhlala kulo waze wamvumbulula endaweni okuthiwa yiParadise, kokuyindlu kwamazenge okuncane okokuthi kumele uzigoqe ukuthi ulale phakathi. UGivemore kakwazi futhi awufuni ukuthi abekwazi. Usekukhohliwe unaMgcobha, ngemva kweminyaka yonke le. Ugqoke isigqoko sokulala esimnyama. Avule isivalo engabuzanga lokuthi ngubani, ngendlela owawuvulele ngayo uGivemore kwesinye isikhathi nxa umlindele, usazi ukuthi nguye kuphela ozafika.

Sunset. Alungise izinto zakhe masinyane unaMgcobha. Zihelile ecansini okuzakwenzelwa khona okulandileyo. Lezinye izinto ezinengi ongazaziyo zilapha ecansini. Kulekhandlela elibomvu phezu kwesitulo. Yilo elikhanyisa phansi. UnaMgcobha akuqhubele ucingo lokulengisa izigqoko athi luqondise. Uthi uluqondisa uzibuze ukuthi kungani ethi wenze njalo ngoba awazi lutho ngomsebenzi walolucingo. Uthule, uluqondise ngoba ezinye izinto azibuzwa.

Sunset. Usulwelule ucingo, ulubeke ecansini, eceleni kwezinye izinto asezihelisile unaMgcobha. Kulenditshi elesepa yempuphu leqhele, ithawulo, is'pontshi lezinye izinto ongazaziyo. Loba ungazazi ezinye izinto, uthule ungabuzi. Abesesithi khupha ijini yakho ebambayo, lephenti, uqethuke uvule imlenze, inyawo zithinte phansi.

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Sunset. Ngemva kwesiga sotingo lokulengisa izigqoko, ngemva kokusebenzisa izihlahla oziphiwe ngunaMgcobha, ngemva kokuphumula, ube loGivemore. Umthande okwesabisayo. Uyamuzwa ephakathi-phakathi kwakho. Uthabe ukuthi into yakhe ayicijanga njengocingo. Into yakhe yenza uzwe ususezulwini. Umbambe okwenhlathu isephula inyamazana ezayidla, umkopele nkiiiinii eqolo ngenyawo zakho. Engakahambi akuthembise imota entsha ozazikhethela yona wena. Ubobotheke okomuntu ongena ezulwini usubona inhambo ozazenza, ezinde lezimfitshane. Uzibone usuyivuthela, loba nje ukwazi ukuthi usesemncane, umthetho kawukuvumeli ukutshayela.

Sunset. Ngalobo busuku uzalala ngecele, ubale izibusiso zakho zonke, ngitsho lezisindleleni. Ongakwaziyo yikuthi lezi ezisindleleni azilamsebenzi, azisoze zifike. Uzathi ulele, imiduli yesinye sakho idikize ngamandla ithi wohlo. Uzakopha kokuphela, igazi elingamahlwili. Uthi ufaka isandla ngaphansi uthole kulethumbu elilengayo. Bethi bekhupha isidumbu sakho ekuseni, embhedeni kusale itshatha elilombala welanga litshona, elilula santuthu yegwayi.

Ijwabu lakhe lisamephu

Raisedon Baya

Iphakhi seyatshintsha. Utshani abusathandelananga njengezithandani. Sebutshile. Izihlahla zona zidane okomuntu otshiywe esikhaleni ethembile. Ngabe zilakho ukuhamba, ngabe kade zasuka kulindawo.

Ngisayikhumbula lindawo ngesikhathi sayo, iminyaka engamatshumi amathathu adluleyo. Leminyaka ingaba yibude bempilo yomuntu eZimbabwe. Abantu sebesifa masinyane. Ngangileminyaka emihlanu ngaleso sikhathi. Ubaba lomama besesebatsha. Bezibona belekusasa ezwayo. Sasize ephakhi ukuzokudla iphikhinikhi. Sasibathathu abantwana ngakithi ngaleso sikhathi. Eyethu yayincane nxa iqathaniswa lezinye imuli. Khathesi, isinkulu loba nje ubaba sewatshona. Umama uselabazukulu abayisithupha. Sewalitshiya ledolobho. Usezihlalela emzini wakhe ekhaya lapho agonjolozelwe yimvelo khona. Ngokubona kwami, akulazamvelo ayilandayo. Yikufuna ukuba seduze lobaba. Wabekwa khona ekhaya phela.

Angiyikulilibala leliya langa lephikhinikhi, lobanini. Phela lalingelinye lamalanga ambalwa, lapho esasithola isikhathi sokubandawonye njengemuli, sizikholisela. Mhlalokho sasilenyama yenkukhu lerayisi, amakhekhe, iziwiji le *strawberry ice-cream*. Kwakungani yiKhisimusi ngiyakutshela. Ubaba yena wayezithwalele amabhiya akhe aqandayo. Wayelembodlela ezimbalwa, zigoqelwe kuhle ngama nyuziphepha ukuze bungatshisi utshwala, lokubufihla. Phela eZimbabwe kulicala ukunathela utshwala emphakathini. Angisakhumbuli ukuthi umama yena kukhona akudlayo kumbe akunathayo ngalelo langa. Wayegcwele indawo yonke mhlalokho. Ngikhumbula indlela ayehleka njalo ebobotheka ngayo, ediyazela. Kwakumnandi impela.

Ngemva kokudakaza irayisi letshikheni, sabhodabhoda ephakhi labanewethu. Yayikhanya iyinkalakatha yendawo okokuthi sasingalahleka lokulahleka. Saqala ngokuya echibini lenhlanzi lapho okwakulemihlobohlobo yenhlanzi ezazilemibalabala etshiyeneyo njalo ekhangayo. Saphosela imvuthu zamakhekhe emanzini. Sakholisa ukubukela

inhlanzi zisidla, ezinye zibanga izicucu zamakhekhe. Ngisakhumbula ngiphosela izuka emanzini, ngisitsho isifiso sami sokubhoda umhlaba wonke ngingakhula. Asikafezeki leso sifiso, kodwa indaba engizibhalayo sezifinyelele indawo ezinengi emhlabeni.

Echibini lenhlanzi, kwakulempompi ezaziphosa amanzi eqonga esiyaphezulu, athi nxa esiyaphansi, kube ingani ziyawaginya njalo, zizabuye ziwakhafule aqonge futhi. Sehluleka ukuzibamba. Ngasikhatshana nje, sasesiwaphosele phansi amayembe ethu, sesikholisa ukuqandiswa yila manzi. Kwakumnandi! Ayethi lapho eqonga sibone nankuya umchilo wamakhosikazi phakathi kwawo. “Khangela, khangela, umchilo wamakhosikazi!” ngatsho ngiklabalala ngitshengisa abanewethu. Sabambana izandla sobathathu satsho izifiso zethu.

“Ngifisa ukuba yisikhulu, lokubangumnikazi wephakhi eyinkalakatha njengaleyi,” nguNdaba lowo. Emulini yethu nguye olezifiso ezitshaya khonale emayezini.

“Mina ngifisa ukubalomfazi omuhle ukwedlula bonke abafazi emhlabeni,” nguRuvengo lowo, owayeleminyaka elitshumi lambili, owayethanda ukukhuluma ngothando langesifazane. Angiboni ukuthi kukhona ayekwazi ngezothando ngaleso sikhathi. Safezeka lesosifiso sakhe. Kwathi ngemva kweminyaka ethize wasithatha isiphalaphala sentombi. Kodwa akubanga nsuku ngaki ungadilikanga lowomtshado.

“Mina ngifisa ukuthi ngabengiyinyoni, ngithole amaphiko, ngiphaphe ngiyeloba kungaphi engifuna ukuyakhona,” yimi lowo ngisengezelela ngengoma:

Ngabe ngiyinyoni
Ngilempiko zami
Ngangizaphapha
Ngithi bru-u-u-u
Ngiqonde emayezini

Angasinethi kanjeya amanzi echibi lehlanzi. Sasijanquka, sithabile sibanga umsindo. Umama uthe esibona singelamayembe, sesimanzi te, wakhwaza, “Yeyi lina, akeligqoke. Angifuni lingenwe lufuba. Wena Ruvengo!...” Asizange silindele ukuthi aqedise ayezakutsho. Yithi labaya, siqolotsha siqonda uzhizhi lwenyoni lwemihlobo etshiyeneyo. Ngalezo nsuku yayinhle imihlolo iphakhi, igcwele imihlobo lemhlobo yamaluba. Yonke into yayilemibala ekhanga ilihlo. Sagijima, saquma emibhedeni yamaluba atshiyeneyo.

Omantshingelane ababegcina iphakhi, sasibabiza ngelokuthi ngo 'Green-men' ngoba begqoka impahla eziluhlaza okotshani. Omunye wasikhangela ngawokhozi siqonde lapho okulenyoni khona. Inyoni zithe zisibona sisiza zathi phakami zatshaya amaphiko phezu kwamakhanda ethu andubana ziphaphe ziye phezulu kakhulu. Ezingamavila zasala zizihlalele. Sehluleka ukuzipha ukudla ngoba singasela lutho. Lomantshingelane laye wayekhonapho eduze. Kwehlula khona ukuthi sizifuthe ngamatshe.

Kusenjalo, sabona nansiya isitimela. Kwakuyisitimelanyana esasingaba ngama roli amabili ubude. Okwenza singasiboni isikhathi sonke lesi yikuthi sasingemva kwezihlahlanyana ezazithandwa yizithandane ngoba zisenelisa ukuthi sece, zingabonwa muntu. UNDaba wantininiza eqonda kubazali bethu waphenduka esephethe imali yamatshe. Sasesithenga amatikiti sagada isitimela esabhoda iphakhi yonke, siphethe siklabalala engathi amazwi angaze atshe. Lekhisimusi yayingafiki ekukholiseni okungaka! Eminyakeni eyayisanda kwedlula abantu abamnyama babengavunyelwa khona nje ukusondela eduze lephakhi. Kodwa ngaleso sikhathi, kwasekuyiZimbabwe entsha.

Isitimela sabhoda ngemva kwemyuziyemu, phambi kwe *amphitheatre*, saquma ekharavani phakhi lapho abantu ababefake khona amatende; nansiya, phakathi laphakathi kwezihlahla zezakharanda. Sathola ubaba lomama besimelele, bebambane izandla, bebobotheka, behleka. Kwakusobala ukuthi bayathandana. Nanku phela baze baqabuzana. Angitsho ukuthi babevele bengakaze baqabuzane. Sasingakaze sibabone beqabuzana phambi kwethu.

Sezinengi izikhathi ngisiya ephakhi kusukela ngaleliya langa lephikhinikhi. Sengikengaya khona labangane ngeKhisimusi, njengenjwayelo. Ngake ngaya lentombi engangithandana layo, sahlala echibini lenhlanzi, saphosela imali yamatshe satsho isifiso sethu sokuguga sisonke. Lokhu ngisakhumbula lokuthi ekwehlukaneni kwethu ngambhalela inkondlo:

Phosa ilitshe
 Utsho isifiso
 Wanginyenyezela
 Sidansa, siphakathi kobuhle bephakhi
 Singathi siyandiza ebuhleni bephakhi
 Ngaphosela amatshe
 Lemali yamatshe
 Ngatsho izifiso zami
 Zadinwa izandla zami

Abanzima amatshe
Yangathengi lutho imali yamatshe!

Izithandane ezicwile nya ethandweni azisezi lapha. Imuli ezifuna ukutshaywa ngumoya zingekho ezindlini zazo lazo azisezi lapha. Sekubuya abangela msebenzi abalethwa yindlala lamadino okubhudula idolobho lonke bedinga imisebenzi. Yibo obathola behlezi, belele kumbe becambalele lapha ephakhi, becatshele amehlo abantu. Baza lapha ukuthi bakhande amacebo okuthi benzeni okulandelayo. Abanye engibabona ephakhi yimihambuma – sebhala khonapha. Ababengekho besempini, amawoveti, sebakhe amadumba, basikelana iziqephu zephakhi lapho abazalima khona umumbu lezinye izilimo. UMeya wedolobho uke wabethusela ngokubadudula kodwa amazwi akhe atshaye elitsheni. Ngubani ongathinta amawoveti? Angithi ilizwe ngelabo.

Ukuza kwami ephakhi namhlanje kwehlukile. Ngilapha nje ukuzokhumbula leliya langa lephikhinikhi yokuqala lemuli yami. Ngizoyivuselela inkoliso yaleya mini. Ngifisa ukubona umkami ebobotheka, ehleka njengomama ngaleya mini. Umkami asukume athi uyeza, usaya esambuzini. Usukuma nje nampa abantu abathwele amabhakane bequma ephakhi beqonde *e-amphitheatre*. Ngamatitsha. Sebelenyanga ezedlula ezintathu bekhalele umsebenzi. Lokhu kuhlola ukufa kwezemfundo, nanku phela amatitsha amanengi asayasebenza kwamanye amazwe lapho okuleholo elingcono.

Ngikhangele umntanami oleminyaka emine. Ngizibuze ukuthi mfundo bani azayithola ekuqaleni kwakhe isikolo eminyakeni embili ezayo? Ngilesifiiso sokuqanjula ephakhi, ngigijime lomntanami besesigada isitimela lesiya esincane engangisigada ngisakhula. Ngifisa ukukhohlwa ngamatitsha athwele amabhakane, ekhonona ngeholo elincane. Ngifisa ukukhohlwa ngomkami ofuna sithathe ikhefu siyelwandle eDurban noma nje esazi ukuthi imali yakhona asilayo. Kunye kuphela engikufunayo. Injabulo. Ukugona bonke engibathandayo, ngibathandele ngengalo zami, bazizwele ukuthi ngibathanda kanganani. Yikho lokho kuphela engikufisayo lengikucabangayo.

Aphenduke umkami athi, “Ithoyilethi ikhiyiwe. Bakhiye sibili ithoyilethi esetshenziswa ngumuntu wonke! Ngamanyala lawa. Manje ngizakwenzani?” Uzonde uyaphuphuma. Ngiyazi ukuthi isizatho ayisiyo thoyilethi ekhiyiweyo. Ufuna ukuya eDurban. Kukhona engimbekele khona, inkalakatha yento. Uzaswela lamagama mhla ngimtshela. “Bhoda ngemva kwesihlahla lesiya. Akulamuntu ozakubona,” yimi lowo sekusithi ngihleke. Angikhangele ngamehlo azingqamu, kodwa abhode ngemva kwesihlahla

aquthe. Akulamuntu ombonayo aze aqede. Kudlule ixekana lamatitsha angontanga. Batshaya itoyiyoyi, bahlabela ingoma zempini. Ekukhuleni kwami, amatitsha ebengabantu abahamba ngezimota. Akulezinsuku, ahamba ngenyawo.

“Ngizwa ngilulazekile. Sengibhoda ngemva kwesihlahla njengomfazi wemakhaya!”

“YiZimbabwe leyi s’thandwa! Iyakufikisa!”

“Akuhlelisi. Sivele sidingani khonapha?” Ame eduze kwami uRungano, mina ngiqhubeke ngilumaluma iqatha lenyama yenkukhu. Ugqoke isikipa esibhalwe “Faithwear” lesiketi esimhlophe esifitshane. Ngiyayithanda indlela abunjwe ngayo, kuhlanganisela ubuso bakhe obuyindingilizi, amehlo akhe amakhulu lendebe zakhe eziqatha. Isifiso sami yikuthi athokoze ekubeni ngumkami.

“*Mami*, asibuyeleni ng’khaya. *Udedi* angasala lapha nxa efuna,” kutsho indodakazi yami. Ukudla kakuthintanga ngitsho. Okufiswa yindodakazi yami le egqoke ijini, yeluka inwele, yikuthi ngabe uzibukelela u*Shreck* kulokuthi abelapha ephakhi. Akulalutho oluhambayo – icebo lami liyala ukusebenza. Sekungathi umkami lendodakazi balwisa khona ukuthi icebo lami lokuza ephakhi liphumelele.

“Hawu, s’thandwa, hlala phansi. Angithi sisanda kufika nje. Lokudla awukakuthinti.”

“Indawo le iyadanisa. Khangela amatitsha lawa. Zwana lengoma zabo. Ngiyakucela, asiye kwenye indawo.”

URungano uke wasebenzela iphephandaba likaHulumende, eyintathelizindaba. Yilawo maphephandaba ayepheka indaba zamanga, eqhuba ingxabano lomona ebantwini. Ekuqaleni wayewuthanda umsebenzi wakhe, ikakhulu nxa akubhalileyo kuphuma kupheji yokuqala, kuyikho isiqokoqela esikhulu. Kodwa ngokuya kwesikhathi unembeza wala. Waqala uRungano ukuwuzonda umsebenzi wakhe. Kwelinye ilanga wehluleka ukuzibamba. Kwaphahluka yonke into mhla walelo langa. Wamtshela zagcwala u-*editor*. Walaluka esemtshele ukuthi wayesedinwe yikusetshenziswa ekuqambeni amanga libandla elibusayo. Wengezelela ngokuthi yena wayengasimsekeli webandla elibusayo, njalo engazi ngitsho lokuthi ikhadi laleli bandla lalinjani. Wahle waxotshwa khonapho khonapho, wancitshwa lemfanelo zakhe. Khathesi usebhalela amanyuziphepha abalwa ku-*internet* nxa ethe wathola inyuziphepha efuna ukubhalelwa ngodaba oluthize.

“Okufunayo sibili, Rue, kuyini?” ngimbuze.

“Uyakwazi ukuthi ngifunani. Wathembisa ukuthi sizakuya eDurban.”

Ulokhe emile. Kudlule imota zamapholisa ezintathu. Zigcwele amapholisa asebenza ukuchitha imibuthano ngokutshaya abantu, amapholisa erayothi. Imota ziqonde e-*amphitheatre*.

“Okwephakhi lokhu vele akuhambelani lami. Mhlawumbe eminyakeni engamatshumi edluleyo bengingakuthakazelela, khathesi ngitsho.” Ngicabange ukuthi ngibhudule izulu lomhlaba ekulungiseleleni lephikhinikhi. Akulasitolo engingasingenanga. Ngingene zonke izitolo ngidinga irayisi, itshikheni lesaladi khrimu. Bekubetha umoya ezitolo. Ngitsho ulutho olulodwa emashelufini. Akuzange kungimangalise ukuthi labathengisi bebezamula, ngitsho lokuthi bangikhangele ngingena kumbe ngiphuma ezitolo zabo. Ngicine ngikuthola ngomkoto lokhu kudla, kungaduli nje kulomuntu phansi. Akusaphekekanga lakuphekeka futhi. Lokhu bekungenzeka njani amagetsi akhona ezenzela santando – ecitsha, alayithe, acitshe, imbiza zizeziphole? Isicitshecitshe samagetsi sekuyinhlalo yakhona. Bengingathenga inkuni ngiphekele phandle, kodwa okuyizikhunyana okungengaki kudula ukwedlula imali yonke engivunyelwa ukuyikhipha ebhenki ngelanga. Ayitholakali laleyo mali ngaphandle kokuthi ngilale ngilindile, ukuthi ivulwa ibhenki ngibe ngomunye wabaqala ukungena. Iyaphela imali ebhenki!

Ngithi ngibona ukuthi sengifuthelana, ngithi lothu, ngibhodabhode. Angifuni ukuthi umtanami lomkami babone ukuthi sengizondile. Ubaba wayehlala engixwayisa ukuthi akukuhle ukuthi abantu ababili abathukutheleyo babendawonye. Kumele ngehlise umoya. Kuyatshisa, isibhakabhaka siluhlaza tshoko, asithembisi lutho ngaphendle kokuqhubeka sigaya ukutshisa. Dukuduku, kukhwaze umbhobho. Ukudubula kuvela ngakucele le-*amphitheatre*. Ngingakawuvuli lomlomo, nampa abantu bethululeka, begijima behlaba umkhosi beqonde icele lephakhi esikulo. Amapholisa erayothi abahlezi ngemuva abantu, ayabavuba ngemiqwayi. Ngihle ngizizwele ngokuhlaba emakheleni ukuthi obekudutshulwa yi *tear gas*, intuthu ehithayo.

“Rue, baleka!” yimi lowo ngimemeza, ngigijima ngiqonde indodakazi yami. URungano uhlahle amehlo. “Baleka!” ngiklabalale njalo, sikhathi sinye ngisithi hlasi indodakazi yami ngibaleka. URungano aphuze ukubaleka. Ngimbone ekhahlela oqwa bakhe ukuthi abakhiphe masinyane abe segijima. Amapholisa erayothi asegcwele indawo yonke. URungano useginywe luzhizhi lwabantu, angisamboni. Ngigijime ngingene ezihlahleni, ngidlule isitimela (sesafa), ngidlule ichibi lenhlanzi (selatsha), ngize ngiyekuma phakathi komgwaqo omkhulu. Amatitsha lawo abuthene kulomgwaqo. Imota zime ngoba umgwaqo usuvalekile. Ayesaba amatitsha ukweqela ngale komgwaqo ngoba yikho okulamadumba amawoveti khona,

kubuye lawo amawoveti asejamile phambi kwamadumba awo. Amapholisa athi khwimilili, angawalandeli amatitsha emgwaqweni omkhulu. Sekungathi kulesivumelwano noma singabhalelwananga phansi, ukuthi amapholisa aphelela lapha ekuxotsheni amatitsha.

“Ungaphi umama?” ibuze indodakazi yami qede ikhale. Intuthu ehitshayo isimngene emehlweni. Isihayiza okwebilebile.

“Uyeza,” ngitsho ngidinga ngamehlo ebantwini abami amadlondlongwane. Ayisuse enye ingoma amatitsha. Le ngegolombayo! Njalo uyazizwela lawe ukuthi iqophile. Ngimbone uRungano. Uyaqhula, uyakhala. Ngigijime ngiye kuye.

“Bangitshayile. Bangisukele ngingenzanga lutho bangitshaya. Izinja zabantu lezi.”

“Ulimele?”

“Angazi, kodwa unyawo lwami lembambo zami kuyatshotshsozela. Inyamazana leziyana, azingiphanga lona ithuba elincane lokuthi ngichasisse ukuthi angilani lokwenzakalayo.”

Athi usathi uhlala phansi emgwaqweni, ngimqage ngimbambe isandla, siqonde endlini. Ensukwini kusithatha imizuzu elitshumi ukuya endlini. Kodwa ngoba uRungano eqhula njalo engakujayelanga ukubhadula phansi ngenyawo engelazicathulo, kusithathe isikhathi eside ukwedlula imizuzu elitshumi. Sifika endlini, anqunule uRungano ukuze ngibone ukuthi ulimele kanganani. Umdwetshudwetshu samzila yemephu ngenxa yolunya lwamapholisa. Uxathuke iqolo lezibunu, uyesabeka. Uthule. Kasakhali. Ngithathe umuthi ngimgcobe. Sengizisola kakhulu ngempumela yalelilanga. Kungesimi, ngabe kakho kulobubuhlungu umntanabantu.

“Isikhwama sami sisele ephakhi. Phakathi kule phaspoti le *driver's licence* yami,” atsho ekhweza ilizwi ngoba sengimthunukile ekumgcobeni kwami eqolo.

Ulokhe ecabanga ngeDurban. Ngimkhangele. Ngokuthula ngisukume ngiyedinga izinto zakhe ezisele ephakhi. Ngithi sengisemnyango ngibone sekulithuba lokuthi ngimtshele okuhle ebengimfihlele khona. Ngitshibilike ngiqonde embhedeni.

“Somoya, kukhona engifuna ukukutshela khona.”

“Kuyini?” avuke ahlale embhedeni.

“Ngitshiyile umsebenzi.”

“Ungatshiya njani ungaqalanga wakhuluma lami?”

“Akulalutho ebesingalukhuluma Rue.”

“Nxa bekungelalutho lokukhuluma, usungitshelani pho khathesi?”

Athi votshololo embhedeni.

“Uyazi lawe ukuthi bengingachelesanga emsebenzini. Bekungasebenzeki, lokuliholo kwakhona kungayindawo.”

“Manje usuzakwenzani khathesi? Ngithemba kukhona osukucabangile.”

“Angikwazi. Nxa sengisazi, ngizakutshela.”

Ngikuhlele kudala ukuthi ngizakwenzani, kodwa asikafiki isikhathi sokumazisa. Ngitshibilike ngiphume. Ngiyazi ukuthi inkulumo le ayikapheli. Ephakhi akuselamuntu, ngaphandle kwamapholisa erayothi alokhu enqumanquma eyisixukwana, njengezinja zizingela. Ngiqonde lapho ebesizadlela khona iphikhinikhi. Ukudla kwethu kuchithizwe kwagcwala indawo yonke. Ngidobhe esinye sezicathulo zikaRungano. Isikhwama nya, kodwa iphaspoti lelayisensi kubekwe kuhle phezu kwebhentshi lesamende khonapho eduze. Ube lozwelo othethe isikhwama. Ngizibuze ukuthi kungaba ngamapholisa kumbe omunye umuntu nje. Utitsha mhlawumbe? Ngidinge esinye isicathulo kodwa ngitsho ukuthi ngisithole.

Iphakhi seyatshintsha imihlolo. Isimbi, ayisabukeki ngitsho. Uqethu lowa omuhle, du. Zonke izihlahlana eziluhlaza ungazibona? Amanzi ayempompoza, ekhupha umchilo wamakhosikazi, lawo qha. Inhlanzi ungazibona? Endaweni yazo sekulamakhondomu asetshenzisiweyo. Yiwo abolela lapho. Inyoni azisekho. Omantshingelane ababelinda lapha begqoke okuluhlaza labo abasekho. Indawo yabo isithethwe yilamapholisa erayothi alomoya omubi. Sekusele isitimela, kodwa sifile, akulamuntu ongasigada.

Khonokho, nanka amapholisa amane *erayothi* aza kimi ehuba. Ngiqale ukuhamba okobalekayo noma nje ngingagijimi. “Wena, mana lapho!” kukhwaza omunye wabo.

Ngifake iphaspoti lelayisensi esikhwameni sebhulugwe, ngilinde ukuthi bafike kimi. Iphutha lokuqala.

“Wena titsha wenzani lapha abanye bakho sebehambile? Angithi silitshelile kudala ukuthi asifuni kubona ngitsho loyedwa wenu lapha?” Sebengiphefumulela ebusweni.

“Angisuye titsha mina.” Bonke bobane bangicijisele amehlo, badlalidlalisa imiqwayi yabo emnyama. Amehlo abo abomvu gebhu okwabantu ababheme imbanje.

“Angisuye titsha,” ngiphinde.

“Sitshengisa-ke ukuthi awusuye titsha.”

Ngiphange ngitshonise isandla esikhwameni. Kuthi dlwe ukuthi ngithe ngitshiya umsebenzi ngatshiya lekhadi lami lemsebenzini. Iphutha lesibili lelo.

“Ngiyaxolisa kodwa...” ngitsho lokuthi bangimelele ngiqede engikutshoyo. Phezu kwami! Imiqwayi yomine isingivathuza yonke indawo.

Ngiwuhlabe umkhosi ngenxa yobuhlungu. Ngiphange nginanzelele ukuthi ngingekela ukuphunyuka, bazangibulala zhi! Ngithuze omunye wabo elibele, ayekuthi genqu le. Ngokuthukuthela okukhulu, ngimkhahlele phakathi kwemlenze andubana ngithele ngejubane, abanye bakhe abathathu bengihlezi ngemuva. Sengimpompoza igazi emlonyeni lemakhaleni. Sengikhumuke lezinyo elilodwa. Ingalo yesandla senxele lembambo kuzwakala kwephukile.

Ngithi ngingena endlini asihlabe isililo uRungano. “Kwenzakaleni?”

“Amapholisa acabange ukuthi ngingomunye wamatitsha.”

Indodakazi yami ithi layo ngokungibona iqale ukukhala. Amehlo kaRungano ahlengezele inyembezi. Angisoze ngikhale phambi kwabo. Hatshi khateshi. Ngilecebo. Sengisenzile isinqumo. Siyathutha eZimbabwe. Sizakuya khona eDurban ka Rungano.

Kwandlela ziyaphambana

Novuyo Rosa Tshuma

19:23

Ayisizo nje izithunzi lamathunzi lapha ebhoda. Izithunzi zakhona zicathame emathunzini amakhona, zicathamele abasekukhanyeni. Kulalezi ezizizwayo njengamasotsha alindileyo, eziphumayo ebunyameni, zibathi nhlo emehlweni abantu; zibagolombe njalo ziqholoza, zisehla zikhwela ngelayini yabantu. Akula ngitsho loyedwa ozithembayo lezizithunzi. Zithi lapho zisondela ebantwini, ubone abantu bezigoqa, bezidumela sengathi bafuna ukucatsha. Omama babamba izikhwama zabo baqinise. Ezinye izikhwama zigonwe ngamandla zathiwa mba emakhwapheni. Ngamagwala ezithunzi. Zimelele ukuhlasela ezinganjuma ngesikhathi esibi kumbe elibele – njengolahlekileyo edinga ithoyilethi, kumbe untanga okhohliweyo, ocwile nya kungxoxo yemacansini lesithandwa sakhe, kusetshenziswa lamaselifoni avuleka esiya phezulu.

Ngisondele eduze kukaTari.

“Kuyafana lanxa usubuyela ekhaya, ngaphandle kokuthi kutshintshana amacele,” nguTari lowo. “Udlula mchilo kucele leSouth Africa, kodwa eZim, bhasop, *five, six, seven, eight hours* ulindile.”

“Awuqali ukuba lapha?”

“*My dear*, ngidlula lapha *every two to three weeks. Two weeks* ngiseSouth Africa, *two weeks* ngiseZimbabwe.” Alalamele ngakimi afake isandla sakepesi phezu komlomo wakhe athi, “Ngiyathenga ngiyathengisa yonk’ int’ ingaka. Ngike ngagijimisa iphetro, ngitsho leforex, ngithenga ngithengisa amarandi. Angikhipha isinkwa emlonyeni *amabhastedi* aphezulu ngokuthi *iforex* isisetshenziswa okusemthethweni!”

Asondele emuva ame kuhle, ahleke. Uhleka okomuntu ohleli ekutsho lokhu, osekwazi ukuthi kumele ahleke ngaphi kwenkulumo yakhe, abeseluthukuza khonapho kanye okumele lungene khona uhleko lwakhe. Ngibobotheke okokuthi ngingenzani, nanku phela labantu sebesivulele amehlo.

UTari ngumngane engimdobe ebhasini, umngane esizathi ngokufika ePark Station eJohannesburg, ngimlahle njengokumdobha kwami. Ngumuntu wokuthi angitshengise ukuthi kwenziwa njani ekuchapheni ibhoda. Ngumuntu wokuchitha isizungu laye endleleni njengoba kunzima ukulala ngenxa yomsindo werediyo yebhasi. Amakatali akhona alamadlabuzane futhi avimba indlebe. NguSolomon Chimbetu, kuchasisa uTari.

Ngivume ngekhanda.

Chopper Chimbetu and the Dandara Express.

Nginqekuze ikhanda njalo.

Uthi yena uke waya babona ngawakhe amehlo laba baculi kuviki ephelileyo eHarare Gardens. *Massive*, angezelele. Ngiyakwazi yini ukugida isungura?

Ngizamule.

Nxa ume elayinini etsholobelayo, ongeke uyibone ukuthi ikhanda layo lingaphi, awusibali isikhathi. Utsheda kancane-kancane, engathi lenyawo ayisizo zakho. Uwavula amehlo ungacwayizi, kungela lutho olukhangeleyo. Ucina usukhangela phezulu esibhakabhakeni, uhlanganisa ukuchaya kwenkanyezi, uzama ukuphuma lolutho oluthize. Ifulawuzi lerozi, liphelele logatsha. Uphiko lwenyoni.

“*T for Tari*,” atsho njalo ekhombela esibhakabhakeni. Ngingamboni lowo “T.”

“Hmm.”

Ungadinwa yikukhangela phezulu, uqala ukubukela labo abaphambi kwakho. Njengezithandani lezi ezikhanya zingabantwanyana. Umfana wakhona ungathi uleminyaka engu *sixteen*. Unkazana yena ukhanya emncane kakhulu ukwedlula lapho. Ukhanya ethabile, mhlawumbe ngoba ulomzimba omncane. Isisu sakhe sithe puntshu engathi yinto enamathiselweyo, emhlane ubhensile. Okuzinyawana kwakhe ungathi kwaxhunyuwa umdali esetshintshe ingqondo yokuthi angazifaki. Kunzima ukukholwa ukuthi uzithwele. Ungathi ngumntwana omncane olesisu esiqunjiswe yikhwashi, njengalaba esijayeke ukubabona kumkhankaso wokuqeda indlala eAfrica, i “*Give aid to Africa*.” Uphethe uphulula ingalo yesithandwa sakhe okungapheliyo. Kwesinye isikhathi ulalamela kusithandwa sakhe asinyenzezele ezimnandi endlebeni, abuye aqonde, ehleka okukhulunywe yisithandwa sakhe. Umfana uyayinanza inkazana yakhe, ngendlela umuntu ananza ngayo into ececisileyo ephathini.

Nxa ususwele okunye ongakwenza emveni kokubuka abaphami kwakho, lasemaceleni, lomngane wakho omdobhileyo isimuse kude imicabango yakhe, ucina ulala obomvundla. Ugoqa izandla esifubeni,

ukhangele le, uzame ngawo wonke amandla ukuthi ungacabangi lutho. Sonke sesabufunda lobu buciko bokulinda. Yikho nje lanxa siselayinini abantu bawisa iphika, bahudule inyawo bathi, “Hayi ah.”

“Bengithi amalayini siwatshiye ngakithi.”

“Shuwa.”

Baselempilo abantu benkosi. Baziqhunsela uhleko awusoze utsho ukuthi kusebusuku, kuyatshisa. Basuselana zona ezingapheliyo ngeGoli.

“I selifoni yami yatshontshwa ngelanga ngifikileyo. Bangicela ngabapha. Phela ngizwa kuthiwa akumelanga utshinge ngitsho, nxa beyicela ifoni. Bangakugwaza ufel’ ifoni nje.”

“Wen’ ungcono bayicela eyakho. Mina bangifaka amampama bengakayiceli leyo foni. Kusukela lapho, angisathwali foni edulayo. Lakhathesi ngilokuzozo kwe *Nokia* okwe handredi randi. Bathe ukubona okuzozo kwami babuye bangithela amampama futhi ukuthi yindaba ngithwala uzozo wefoni. Bakuthatha bakutshayeleva phansi.”

“Ungcono wena ngoba wathola amampama kuphela. Mina ingqamu yadlalela ebusweni. Ngemva kweviki ngangilokhe ngisesaba ukuphuma endlini.”

“Ulenhlanhla wena ngoba bakutshengis’ ingqamu kuphela. Mina bangigwaza. Bengizakutshengisa inxeba lakhona, yikuthi lisezibunu.”

Azipheli indaba zeGoli. Ziya zingezelelwa isawudo ngamzuzu munye.

Unkazana wokuzithwala, ngitsho yena lo ongathi ulekhwashini, usencenga umama odinda amaphaspoti. Ijaha lakhe lijamile eceleni kwakhe, libukele, akulalutho elingalwenza. “Hayi,” kutsho umama odinda amaphaspoti. “Ngingakwekela udlule njani khona kusele ilanga elilodwa? Buyela, awuvunyelwa.”

Adobhe isidindo.

“*Please*, ngiyacela,” kuncenga inkazana ize iviyoce, ikhongozele ngezandla okomuntu ocela usizo emgwaqweni. “Ngithe ngithola amalanga ami okokucina *eHome Affairs*.”

“*Denied*,” kutsho umama wokudinda amaphaspoti, esithi di iphaspoti kasisi wesisu. “Buyel’ ekhaya. *Next!*”

“*Please*, ngiyakucela bakithi hawu-”

“*Next!*”

Ngitshede ngiyephambili, ngiqhube iphaspoti yami ngesikhala esisewindini. Unkazana wesisu uphethe iphaspoti yakhe ngokuhlululukelwa okukhulu. Ungathi impilo isitshabalele kuye. Ibala elithi DENIED lidindwe lanquma ipheji yonke yephasspoti. Ijaha lakhe limgone ngengalo

engelampilo. Baqinisile ukuthi isifiso asilamngcele. Ukuhamba umango wonke lo, iviza isizaphela?

Omunye ubaba athi kunkazana wesisu, “Uphambanisile. Uthi ubezatshintsha njani ingqondo yakhe wena ucela mgceke wonke umuntu ebona? Ufuna ukumenza isiyelele?” Athi thalathala abesesithi, “Khuluma lomunye, lilodwa...” Inkomba lesithupha kuhlikihlane. “*Grisa izandla.*”

Azihambe umuntu wabantu atshiye unkazana sezigeleza inyembezi, emi lejaha lakhe. Bamkhangele esiyaphuma emnyango. Badidekile.

Ngiphuma ekudindiseni iphaspoti yami, ngisiya ebhasini, ngiyiqabuze ngiphose lokuyimanzisa ngendenda. Ukuphuma lapho okudindiswa khona kungathiwanga buyela ekhaya, uzwa kusithi phapha. Lesikhathi osimotshe elayinini uphanga usikohlwe, lobuhlungu bakhona sebufiphele.

Bantu, imazombezombe indlela yokuya ebhoda. Inde ukwedlula uhambo lwakhona. Ubude bakhona abulinganiswa ngamakhilomitha. Bulinganiswa ngezithukuthuku lenyembezi, lobuhlakaniphi, lokubobotheka kwamanga, kanye lawo amanga ngokwawo, lokuncenga – uncenge uze uncengise.

Kumele uvuke lingakaphumi. Nxa kuqondane lokuthi mhlalokho akula magetsi, uzaphumputha emnyameni. Uzazivusa kumbe ungazivusi izihlobo oquthe kuzo esigodlweni seHarare, kusiya ngokuthi yizihlobo ezinjani. Ama-*embassy* wonke aseHarare. Nxa uquthe kuzihlobo ezikutshengise kwabasobala ukuthi bakwamukele ngoba ungowegazi kuphela, akulamuntu ozamvusa ukuthi ucele ikhandlela. Uzaphumputha kuphela emnyameni. Kwesinye isikhathi lamanzi kawakho, kusiya ngokuthi izihlobo zakho zihlala ngaphi kwedolobho. Ungazithola-ke usumanzisa ithawulo, usuhlikihla konke okubika ukulala. Masinya langamandla uhlikihla ubuso, amakhwapha laphakathi kwemilenze.

Kungenzakala kungabi lokudla futhi. Lanxa kukhona, kungakuzimela khona ukuthinta ukudla kwakhona ungaphiwanga imvumo. Kulapho ke ozithola usubamba indlela kusesemnyama, amathumbu etshaya ukhwelo. Awulaso isikhathi sokucabanga ngokwesaba ngoba usucelile kuMdali labaphansi ukuthi bakukhokhele kuhambo lwakho lolu. Nanko phela vele selizaphuma ilanga.

Ugada ikhombi kumbe ezimbili ukuze uyefika e-*embassy* ye South Africa, kusiya ngokuthi ube uquthe ngaphi. I-*embassy* yeSouth Africa ilapho okugcwele khona amanye ama *embassy*. Isabhabha lapho okulama *embassy* khona ithule, ilemigwaqo ebanzi lezindlu ezilamayadi inkalakatha. *Diplomatic*. Indlela oyithathayo ungehla ikhombi ilamabhakane akhomba ama *embassy* atshiyeneyo. I-*British Embassy*. I-*Canadian Embassy*. I-

embassy yeKuwait – le ke ifanele ukuthi ayilabantu. Ngubani vele ongaya eKuwait? Uthi ufika e*South African Embassy*, udane. Noma uvuke lingakaphumi, ilayini yakhona isibhode yasekela ifensi, yaze yachithekela le, emgwaqweni. Yiyo kuphela i-*embassy* elokuphithizela ekuseni okungaka.

Abathengisayo behla bakhwele ngelayini. Bathengisa amapheni okubhala, imhlanga yokubhema, ama*freezit*, amakhokhokhola, amabhanana lamabhanzi. Kulondoda othatha amapikitsha. Ukhombela kokulidumba okungaphansi kwesihlahla, abizele esithi, “*Passport size photos, visa photos, iloba yiphi ifotho abathi uyithathe ngiyayenza mina, cheap cheap photos varume, quality photos, photos photos....*”

UMafotho ukhangela wonke umuntu odlulayo emehlweni, engathi ngokubakhangela kangaka bazathatha kuye lawo mafotho.

Oyisimanga kubobonke laba bathengisi ngulo okuqaga usaxhuma ilayini emsileni.

“Sista, kusobala ukuthi awuzukungena namuhla e-*embassy* ngoba usemuva kakhulu elayinini. Bathatha *fifty* kuphela ngelanga.” Ame kancane ukuthi akutshoyo kuthophele kuwe. “Kodwa ngingakusiza sista. Eyami indawo ngunamba *twenty-three*, ngingakuthengisela kalula nje.”

Umkhangele lomama engathi ubona umhlola. Abaseduze lawe sebethiye indlebe. Ngumfazi omfitshane ogqoke isiketi eside esimhlophe, esitshaya khonale emazwaneni, leqhiye engcole okwesabekayo. Akukhangele okomuntu ongelasikhathi sokudlala, oqhuba ibhizimusi kuphela.

Umkhangele ngasolayo. “Malini?”

“Handredi randi kuphela.”

Unikine ikhanda. I-handredi inengi kakhulu.

Unikine ikhanda ukhangele eceleni.

“Hawu, asikhulume phela nkazana, ulemalini? I-*fifty* injani?”

Unikine ikhanda futhi. Akhwixize amahlombe, asuke ahambe.

“Kusobala awuyifuni iviza sista.”

“Bangama khurukhu abantu laba,” kutsho omunye umuntu. “Yibo abenza ilayini ibende. Kuthi thina esifuna amaviza okweqiniso sizithole sesisemuva khonale. Kuzabaphelela ngeliny’ ilanga.”

“Kumele sikhomplene e-*embassy*.”

“Heh, ukhomplene? Ungangena phakathi ungasithol’ isikhathi sokukhomplena ngezint’ ezinje? Ukuthola yona viza ngumsebenzi, *please*.”

“Kumele sizilungisele abantu laba. Uyakwazi ukuthi abanye babo balala khonapha? Ubusuku bonke njengabathakathi.”

Ngenye-ke yezindlela zokwenza imali; ukulala elayinini e-*South African Embassy* belayinele abangenelisiyo ukufika lapha kusese le, ekuseni.

Vele sekusemahlangeni. Ukwenza imali kumbe ukwehluleka ukuyikhanda sekusiya ngobukhali kumbe ubuthundu benqondo yakho.

Nanto ilanga likhwela lisiya phezu kwezindlu. Kuphange kutshise vutha. Ibhulawuzi eluhlaza oyigqokileyo, loba ingabambi, isimanzi te. Isinamathela eqolo ngenxa yamaginqo. Uzibukele zitheleka nganyenganye izimota ze-*embassy* – ama Pajero, ama Range Rover lama Mercedes. Baphume abahamba ngazo, bakhuphe amagogorosi elanga, babingelelane, babuye baqgoke amagogorosi abo elanga, bangene phakathi kwe-*embassy*. Ulinde usalinda. Ulindisise. Akumangalisi lokhu ngoba ukulinda elayinini sekuyimpilo yeZimbabwe. Osowenu bengacina bengabalindayo impilo yabo yonke. Ekucineni abantu bazakhohlwa lokuthi balindeleni.

Ilayini iqale ukuhamba ngesiqubu, abantu khwatshu-khwatshu. Ha-be! Ithemba lisuke labalikhulu, masinyane futhi. Ungakayi ndawo phandle kwefensi, uzwe sekuthiwa sebethethe inani lanamhlanje. Uzabuya futhi kusasa uthole ilayini isitshaya khonale, ungenelisi ukungena futhi. Kodwa ithemba lingangolwandle, njalo alibulali. Silinda sisalinda emalayinini lanxa sibona ukuthi asisoze sikuthole esikufunayo.

Kusasa kwakhona uhle udinga umama weqhiye yakhe eyidoti. Ulokhe egqoke ezayizolo. Akulalutho alutshintshileyo – qhiye, sigqoko, lebhulawuzi yakhe ecazimulayo, eluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka. Unuke umoya, uthungatha iphunga lakhe. Kuthi lanxa kusithi hatsha, ubuyisele ikhanda emuva engathi iphunga lakhe likujumile.

“Ngile foti,” nguwe lowo.

“Ah sista, faka okuyi theni phezulu.”

“Ngile foti kuphela. Kukuwe. Ithathe kumb’ uyiyekele.”

“*Horayithi*, kahle phela sista. Namhla ulenhlanhla ngoba ngingu namba sikistini.” Eyadini ye-*embassy* liphiwe amanamba, lilayiniswe. Ilayini yakhona itsheda kancane kancane okonwabu. Libasele ilanga. Ukutshisa kuthi khonapho! Lamaphunga abantu atshiyeneyo athi nki! Kulesidudla somfazi esilokhu siphuma sibiza abantu ngamanamba abo. Umnyaka wonke, abantu bephakathi! Usikhangele isikhathi uze udinwe. Kwelikade, inamba yakho ize ibizwe layo. Utshwaphuluke, uhaluzele usiyangena.

Uginye kanzima sokulithuba lakho ekhanda lelayini, ewindini. Umlomo wome qha! Kukanengi usizwa ngabantu laba, ukuthi badinga izinto ezincane ezokuthi bengathathi amaphepha akho, bakuncitshe iviza. Uthandaze, ucela ukuthi athathwe ngolomusa lozwelo amaphepha akho. Wonke umuntu osekhawunteni, ngemva kwewindi, ngumfazi. Ufise ukuthi aluba ngamadoda wodwa asebenza emawindini. Manje abafazi, akukho ongabakhanga ngakho. Akulakucwatshela kumbe ukuzitshila ongakwenza.

Othatha amaphepha akho kakukhangeli lakukukhangela lapho ewaphedla. Wena uyakwazi ukuthi ulazo zonke incwadi ezifunakalayo ngoba ukhangele wakhangelisisa ungakasuki ukuza lapha. I-*police clearance* ulayo. Uyithole ngokusomisa umpholisa ongaba yintanga kayihlo. Ubefuna inamba yakho yeselifoni, wamthembisa amanga okuthi lizahlangana, uthembe ukuthi lesosikhathi esibekiweyo siyathi sifika sekukudala wahamba. Ulawo *amatraveller's cheques* awe *two thousand rand*. Imali yakhona uyikwelede kuMi, uAnti wakho ohlala eSouth Africa. Ufika nje kumele uyibuyisele imali yakhe. I phaspoti ikhona. Yona wenze okokudiza ukuthi uyithole. Yonke indawo kumele udize. Lanxa ekutshela ukuthi ujoyine enye ilayini yokubhadalela iviza, lokuthi uphenduke ngemva kwamaviki amabili ukuzoqaza iviza yakho, ngitsho ukuthi avuse amehlo umama osewindini.

Usunqobile. Kodwa ukuthaba kwakhona kuthi bayi, kucitshe.

Umuntu wamafotho uthi woza thatha amafotho noma usuphuma e-*embassy*.

00.06

Abanye abantu bayadela sibili. Ngakucele leSouth Africa, ethoyilethi esetshenziswa ngumuntu wonke, kulesaziso esinamathiselwe emdulini. Kubhalwe:

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NO ZIM DOLLARS
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Ngithathe umfanekiso, ukwenzela ikusasa. Ngelinye ilanga, ilizwe leZimbabwe selivukile, lingasahlalanga ibheya, umfanekiso lo ngizawutshengisa abantwabami. Ubuhlungu bubamnandi sebuyimbali. Ukuyangiswa kuhlekisa usukucabanga ngemva kweminyaka ethize.

Isuke ibhasi ebhoda. Kube lokuthaba okumangalisayo sibona ibhakane elibhalwe “Musina.” Sime egarajini lokuqala, okuthelwa khona idizili.

“*Ten minutes!*” kumemezela udrayiva.

Lamalayithi ngapha komngcele ungathi akhanya ukwedlula aweZimbabwe, futhi ungathi achelesile. Kwesinye isikhathi ujabuliswa yizinto owawungakaze ucabange ngitsho langelanga elilodwa ukuthi zingakujabulisa. Ngapha akucitshwa magetsi, akulamanzi avalwayo, akula

malayini. Ngithenge okohlanya. Iphakethi lama *Simba chips*, i-*Cadbury Chocolate*, ikhokhokhola esegabheni, amanzi asembodloleni, le phayi ye-*chicken and mushroom*. Ngidobhe lephakethi leziwiji ezingathi zibomvu. Ngazicina ngisengumntwana iziwiji lezi. Akumangalisi ukuthi ngizizwa ngingumntwana.

UTari uphethe emlonyeni, kathuli. Ungathi yilaba abachasisela izivakatshi endaweni zokuzithokozisa.

“I-Pretoria leJohannesburg kubambene. Akulaganga phakathi kwendawo zombili. Uzazibonela lawe ungafika. Ebusuku amalayithi enza amadolobho omabili abe mahle okumangalisayo, uzabona.”

Sekungiphuzele ukuthi ngifike.

Ngizizwa ngilqhawe.

Kuyathembisa ukuthi izinto zizahamba kuhle.

05.07

EJohannesburg ekuseni. Ilanga seliphuma kunina. Ngizwa engathi ngikwenye indawo ehlukeni kakhulu lendawo engizijayeleyo. Kwakhiwe lapha hatshi okokudlala. Kusedolobheni mpela. Umumo womkhathi yiwo kuphela ofana loweZimbabwe. Phandle kwalokho, okunengi kwehlukile, kutsha kimi.

Ukuthi usuphumile ePretoria wangena eJoburg ubona ngamabizo endawo abhalwe emabhakaneni amakhulu aseceleni komgwaqo. Ungalahleka njani endaweni enje? Amadolobho omabili, njengokutsho kukaTari, ayangenana. Akulandawo esele ingakhiwanga.

IGoli. Igcwele imigwaqo ephambanayo. Kuleminye ehamba phezu kweminye. Le ephezulu ilezisekelo zekhonkili eqine saka. Uthi nxa ungena enzikini yedolobho, uhlaza lwezihlahla obulubonela khatshana lukutshengise ukuthi belufihle izindlu, amafekithali, amahotela lama wofisi. Zonke lezi zakhiwo zimi zaqina, engathi zadalwa lomhlaba.

“Cabanga! Angithi aluba yithi laba esinje, esiphucuke kangaka,” atsho uTari, khonokho awise iphika okomuntu odanileyo.

IGoli. Inziki yedolobho igcwele izitezi. Yikhonkili lensimbi, izitina lesamende, ithara lependa. Ayisiwo nje amabhakane akhomba indawo, lathengisa izinto. Athengisa izinto atshengisa ubuciko obukukhulu ekwenziweni kwawo.

Nango uqwa ethe kho eceleni kwenkomitshi yekofi ethunqa intuthu. Ngaphansi kubhalwe, *Ungaqala?* Ungaqala ukwenzani? Zingcitshi zokuqhweba ingqondo. Elinye ibhakane libhalwe, *Cabanga ngendlela engajayelekanga*. Akulamfanekiso, ngamabala kuphela. Lapho engivela

khona, kudala saqala ukucabanga ngendlela ezingakumangalisa, ezingafani ngitsho lakwezinye indawo.

Kubetha umoyana omnandi ekuseni. Imota ungathi ngamangqongqo ahloniwe ehalini. Isikhathi ngu 05.13.

Ngalesi sikhathi iPark Station isathule, ukuthula okuyenga izethekeli. Kuzathi ngemva kwesikhatshana igcware kunyakazele. Ingene, ipake anduba icitshe ibhasi yethu engumkhehlekhehle, isuze ithi *Ntswiii*.

UTari elule isandla, sixhawulane. “Ngijabule ukuhlangu lawe.”

Ngibobothoke, “Lami ngijabulile.”

“Ngicela inamba yakho.”

“Njengoba ngisanda kufika angika....”

“Ngingakupha eyami?”

“Ye.”

Angiqhubele okuliphethshana lapho abhale khona ibizo lakhe, inamba ezimbili, wathi ngokucabangisisa wasebhala le-imeyili adresi yakhe.

“Uku *Facebook*?” abuze.

Nginikine ikhanda.

“Kumele ujoine i*Facebook*. Ungajoyina ungidinge lapho, ungithumele i-*friend request*.”

“Ok.”

“Ya. Hayi-ke, ngikufisela inhlanhla. Ngiyethemba sizahlangana masinyane.”

Atshibilike ahambe, ngimbhabhayise.

09.16

UMi uhlala ekamelweni elilodwa. Ngelinye lamakamelo amanengi kulendawo. Kwazi umlimu yedwa ukuthi mangaki amakamelo alapha, lokuthi kuhlala abantu abangaki. Kuseflathini elingathi lizakuwa. Kodwa alifuni kusalela muva ngoba nanto phela lalo lingathi lijahe ukuyaphezulu, engathi lizathola usindiso khonale, kanti lutho.

Ngiphelelwe. Kwenza lokuqamba amanga kube lula. Ngizenze ongethukanga, ozijayeleyo izinto ezinje. Lokhu akusizi ngoba kumgceke kubanini ndawo ukuthi bayazi, abadingi kutshelwa ukuthi kunjani lapha. UMi angikhangele ebusweni lapho singena. Ufuna ukubona ukuthi ngicabangani. Ayathungatha amehlo akhe. Uzimisele ukulithola iqiniso emehlweni ami. Amehlo akhe ayagijima. Ungathi agida ingoma ephangisayo. Ngendlela amehlo akhe aphenhla ngayo ubuso bami, ngiyabona usekwazi ukuthi noma ngisithi, “Ah, ulendawo encane enhle,” ngitsho ngisithi mfe.

Amagama bakithi! Abika insolo yami, noma bengingaqondanga kusola. Ngizisole sengitshilo. UMi apenise umlomo wangaphansi, akhangele eceleni, akhombele ekhoneni lapho engingafaka khona izikhwama zami. Aqamele umduli, ehle ngawo aze ahlale phansi. Akhwathaze umhlanga wegwayi. Athi ngokuwuthola awufake emlonyeni, awulumathise ngelayitha, ahotshe intuthu, ayigcine emlonyeni ayikhuphe ngamakhala, awise iphika.

UMi ufike iPark Station isinyakazela ekuseni. Wangigona ehleka. Wathi ukubuyela emuva, wangigona njalo.

“Hmm, asikucaka lokhu!” watsho ebabaza.

“Kuhle ukukubona,” yimi lowo ngibobotheka ngiveza amazinyo.

Wasethwala esinye sezikhwama zami, waviyoca kancane, wangathi uthanyela umoya ngengalo wathi, “*Welcome to Jozi neh.*”

Ngaqhubeka ngikhuluma ngesiNdebele yena ephendula ngesi Ndebele-siZulu, ekhuluma njengawo amaZulu, futhi ephethe esithi ne. neh! ne? Bekusithi ngithi, “Hawu, yimi. Wazihlupha nje kangaka, khululeka.” Kodwa ngabona ukuthi sekulomkhandlo phakathi kwethu. Indawo iyamtshintsha umuntu. Kodwa angithi yikho esakulandayo lapha, ukuthi sizibumbe kutsha?

Sithe sisuka ePark Station elawula uMi. Ukuphuma nje ePark Station kwahle kwakhanya ukuthi izinto sezitshintshile. Umsindo wabantu abakhulumayo yonke indawo, ndawonye lowamahuta amakhombi, kungathi zinkunzi zingqikilana. Umnuko wamathaya imota nxa zibamba amabhureki lawo ubambile. Ngapha kuthi umnuko wabantu! Eceleni kwalapho okuhamba khona abantu, kugcwele abathengisayo, okwenza indlela yokuhamba inciphe, kubenzima ukuphambana. Abathengisayo abeneli eceleni kwalapho okuhamba khona abantu. Abanye bazebangena emgwaqweni lokungamadumba abathengisela kikho. Kuyimikhexekhexe okokuthi kungawa loba nini. Okunye kwelekene ungathi zingamula ezidakiweyo ziziqinisa, zisensa engathi azidakwanga ngoba sezibona intombi enhle. Yonke into engathengiswa ichayiwe kumbe ilengisiwe lapha. Amabhanti esikhumba lezigudugudu zamakhiye, izigqoko lezikhwama ezigaxwa emhlane, amakhoyili okuxotsha imiyane. Imihlobohlobo yamaphef'yum. Le foni shopu ikhona. Ngapha kosiwa inyama ku bhrayi stendi. Kuwe iqatha ligiqike phansi, umnikazi alidobhe alibuyisele emlilweni.

Ngumsindo wabantu. Ngumnuko wabantu. Kunyakazela bona njalo abantu! Yimpilo yakhona.

Umuntu lunwabu, uyantshintsha.

“Into yokuqala okumele uyenze,” nguMi lowo singena esizibeni sabantu, “yikuthi uthole umsebenzi. Kulabantu engibaziyo abambalwa abangakuncedisa.”

Nganqekuza ikhanda. “Ye. Kuzothi ngemva komnyaka ngibe sengilayo imali yokuthi ngiye eyunivesithi.”

Angatsho lutho ngalokho.

“Yeyi !” yimi lowo, “indawo le yinkalakatha.”

“Awukaboni lutho, akusiyo langxenye yakhona leyi.”

Ukungcola, lengcekeza egcwele yonke indawo, imisizi lentuthu emnyama tshu esiyingcino emidulini, izakhiwo ezihlezi kuyole ingcekeza; konke lokhu awukuboni ngelanga lakuqala. Ungakubona njani ngamehlo akhangwa yibucwazicwazi balendawo, njalo lethemba lisesephezulu elokuthi udubo lonke luzaphela ngokuza lapha?

Ubuyanga balendawo buzakukhanyela kancane kancane kusukela ngelanga ufika kuleliflathi elilamakamelo amanengi. Ayisibuyanga bobunqunu phela lobu. Ayisibo njalo obudalwa yimpi yemibhobho lemihedla. Ayisibo njalo obeSudan lapho okulendlala yokuthi uthola omama bethwele ingane esezingamathambo kuphela kumbe ezilezisu eziqumbe ingathi zizadubuka. Ayisibo buyanga bamalayini angapheliyo kumbe izitolo ezibetha umoya. Yibuyanga obunkanyazelayo, bubobotheka budinga ubukhulu lenhlalakahle. Yibuyanga obuqinisa ikhanda ngoba busazi ukuthi igolide likhona ngaphandle, lizatholakala. Yibuyanga obukusanganisa ikhanda, uxege amadolo kanti udakwe lithemba lamanga.

Nanko-ke. Sesifikile ekamelweni lika Mi. Kulo matrasi phansi. Ekhoneni kulesitofu, *itwo plate*. Kumi ifriji eceleni kwayo. Nanzi izigqoko ziphuphuma kutshangane bhegi – iziketi, ibhodi, iphenti, iyembe yendoda. Eceleni kwempahla lezi kule ayini. Ngemva kwesivalo kulomfanekiso odumileyo kaMichael Jackson ebambe ingaphambili.

“Izinto bezinzima,” atsho uMi, akhuphe enye intuthu ngamakhala. “Izinto lapha zivele zinzima. Kunzima nxa ungelamaphepha, ungelamali. Ukuwumana konke owawukuzwe ekhaya abantu besithi izinto lapha zilula, khohlw’ uphinde.”

Ngiqhuzule amehlo, ngoba angikwazi ukuthi ngithini. Izinto lezi azitshoyo, angifuni lakuzizwa ngitsho. Ziyangidanisa ngizwe inhliziyo yami itshona. Ayisikho engikulande lapha.

“Isikolo lawo wonke amasimba owacabangayo, khohlwa *my dear*. Lami ngafika lapha ngibhayiza njengawe, ngingelalutho ngaphandle kwamaphupho esikhwameni. Khangela ukuthi ngingaphi manje.”

Kuthi ngimtshela ukuthi *Nguwe lowo, akusoze kube njalo kimi.*

Ngibobothেকে ngoba ungithe nzo, okomuntu olindele ukuthi ngiphendule. Lokhe ngibobotheka. Khonokho nje ngizwe sengimzonda, ngimzondela lokhu akutshoyo. Ngifumbathe ngamandla iphetshana elilenamba zikaTari le-imeyili adresi yakhe. Licine selitshwabhene laba ngokuyintwana nje ngoba nanku lesandla sami siginqile. Ngizayitshiya lendawo engathi kusemarabishini. Ngithola nje ithuba lokusuka lapha, uMi uzangizwela khatshana. Angikhululekanga ngitsho ngoba uMi ulokhe engithe njo, engacwayizi lakancane, okungenza ngicabange ukuthi mhlawumbe uyabona ukuthi ngicabangani. Ngiqhubeke nje ngibobotheka.

Yena lokhu engithe nhlo!

Umatshuna ipiyano

Bryony Rheam

Wehla emtshoveni kanzima njalo kancane kancane uLeonard Mwale. Esinye isandla sasibambelele umgubazi wesivalo, kukanti esinye sikhwathaza esambeni sebhulugwe aligqokileyo. Umtshayeli kwamehlula ukufihla ukuthi ujahile, kalaso isikhathi sokumotsha. Nango phela wayelokhu eyidumidumisa imota engathi uzayisusa uLeonard engakehli. UKhondakitha yena wema ngokwenyena, emnina ngesandla uMwale engathi ngumntwana. Eqeda lapho ukhondakitha wabuka umxhaka wemali owawusezandleni zakhe, okoqala ukubona imali engaka.

Esehlile uMwale, wama eceleni komgwaqo, wakhapha isifinyo sakhe esimhlophe, wesula izithukuthuku. Umtshova lawo wasuka wangena indlela. Wekela isikhwama ayesigaxe ehlombe satshelela saze sahlala phansi. Wayeginqe lomlomo wangaphezulu uMwale. Wathukuza iminwe embili esikhwameni sewestikhothi wakhupha okuliphetshana.

Kwasekuyisikhathi wacina ukuhambela kulendawo yeNdola. Amapiyano ayesevame ukuwatshuna ngalezonsuku kwakungawezikolo noma nje kwakukhona amalutshwana ayewatshunela abanikazi ezindlini zabo. Kwesinye isikhathi amakhosikazi alamapiyano ayemlanda kumbe athumele umtshayeli. Nxa bengenzanga okunye kwalokhu babemupha imali agade ngayo ibhasi, bamuphe lokudla kwemini. Kodwa lomama ayezomtshunela ngalelo langa wayengakatsho lutho ngalokhu. Ngoba elobuntu uMwale, kwamsinda ukuthi abuze. Wayethethe ikheli yalomama wathi uzafika endlini yakhe ngotheni. Kwasekumele atshitshe ukuthi abambe isikhathi. Njengoba kwasekunge Mfumu, laselivutha ilanga, ithara icazimula engathi ngamanzi. Wadobha isikhwama sakhe uMwale wehla ngomgwaqo.

Yayikhona indoda yakoMwale, ingelamtshitsho, ihamba okozwa ubuhlungu. Isimanga yikuthi wayengakhanyi ediniwe njengabanye abalemizimba enjengowakhe. Wayewathanda amasudu uMwale. Ngalelolanga wayegqoke esasibomvu. Wayeyihlabhe konke lamathumbu ayo – ibhulugwe, iwestikhothi lebhathshi. Umkhuba lo wayewubone njalo

wawufunda kuTom Jenkins, okunguye umuntu owamfundisa ukutshuna ipiyano kudala, eminyakeni engamatshumi amane leysisithupha. Lanxa kwakubahlekisa abanengi ukubona umuntu eyithe nki isudu ilanga leAfrika litshisa bhe, wayecalaceleni uMwale. Kuthi lanxa oMedemu abalomusa besithi kakhipe ibhatshi kodwa lokhu anathe amanzi, ale ukwehlukana lebhatshi.

Uthe eseseduze lalapho ayezasebenza khona ngalelolang, wama kancane, wasithi qithi phansi isikhwama sakhe wesula njalo amangino ngehenki yakhe. Wakhupha iwatshi esikhwameni sebhulugwe wakhangela isikhathi. Wayephangise ngomzuzu owodwa. Kwakulenkalakatha yegedi eliluhlaza okwekhaya ehlobo. Wafotoza ibhera ngoba lalivaliwe. Walinda. Wawisa iphika ukuthi akhulume kuhle ku *intercom*. Kanti uzihluphela into engekho ngoba igedi lavuleka kungelamuntu obuzileyo ukuthi ngubani osegadini. Wangena waqonda endlini. Eceleni kwendlela yemota kwakulezihlahlana eziqunywe ngobuciko. Esandleni sakhe senxele kwakuleloni eyayinhle okwamagama, iqunywe engathi uhlanga lunye ngalunye lotshani luyalingana. Evurandini elincane kwakulembiza zamaluba ezimbili, phakathi kwazo kulezihlahlana eziyizithingithingi. Ngakwelinye icele levurandi, kwakugadaniswe izitulo zensimbi zibothswe ngeketane ekhiyiweyo.

Undoda osebenza engadini wamemeza ephakathi kwegaraji elalisekucineni kwendlela okungena ngayo imota. Akasezwanga uMwale ukuthi ubaba lo uthini ngaphadle kokumbona ekhomba umnyango wekhishini, ngemva kwendlu. ULeonard wakhetha ukuqonda kowaphambili. Engakaqoqodi, waqala ngokwesula izithukuthuku njalo. Uthe engakaqoqodi wesula ubuso njalo ngehenki. Umama owayesebenza endlini wabe sethelekile. Engakavuli umnyango waphandle wezwakala ekhiyunula eminye phakathi. Egqoke iyunifomu, ifaskoti leqhiye, wayekhanya ebethwa ngumoya noma kwakutshisa. Wayelobuso obuthokozileyo, obungafihli lutho. ULeonard uthi ebona lokhukubobotheka kwakhe lumama, kwangathi ngumngane wakhe.

“Sakubona mama,” wambingelela. “Ngicela utshale uMedemu ukuthi ngizetshuna ipiyano.”

“Kulungile. Besengitsheliwe, ngilandela,” watsho emvulela ukuthi angene. Indlu yayakhiwe isidala, njengalezi ezakhiwa ngabelungu besanda kufika eAfrika. Kwakuqandelela kamnandi lapha futhi kusithile. Wakhokhela ke lumama, bahamba phakathi kwevurandi elisekele umkhandlo owehlukana amakamelo. Bathi befika emnyango osesandleni sokudla, umama lo wawuvula wasesithi kangene uMwale. Ifenitsha yayibalwa kulendlu. Kwakulethebuli eyisigombolozu phakathi laphakathi

kwendlu, yembeswe ngelembu elimhlophe. Ipiyano yona yayithe qekele emsamo, isekele umduli. Wajama emnyango uLeonard okomuntu omelele ukuthi atshelwe ukuthi enzeni.

“UMedemu... yena... angabe ekhona?” ngu Leonard echwayisisa.

“Uzabuya,” kwaphendula umama osebenzayo. Indlela aphendula ngayo yayibika ukuthi kungenzeka angezi. Wayiqonda-ke ipiyano uLeonard, wafika wabeka phansi isikhwama sakhe, wadonsa isitulo okuhlalwa kiso nxa umuntu etshaya ipiyano, wahlala phansi. Uthe etshibilika wabona umama osebenzayo esevala umnyango.

“Sisi,” nguLeonard ebiza. Wathi khwimilili umama osebenzayo. Waseqhubeka uLeonard, “Ngicela amanzi okunatha aqandayo.”

Wabobotheka kamnandi njalo lumama, wavala umnyango. Waqala ke uLeonard epiyanweni. Wathi lapho esephenduka lejaki yamanzi aqandayo lenkomitsho yeplastiki yokunathela sokudlule imizuzu ethile, wayesephezu komsebenzi wakhe uLeonard. Kwakungasekho lutho engqodweni yakhe ngaphandle kokutshuna ipiyano.

Wathi ukuthatha ikhefu kancane. Wathela amanzi wanatha. Walalela ukuthi angezwa umsinjwanyana lapha ekhaya. Ngitsho. Kwakuthule cwaka. Ngemva kwesikhatshana wezwa owayebucwadelana lendlu ebiza omunye. Mhlawumbe kwakungundoda owayesebenza engadini ebiza umngane wakhe. Ngaphandle kwalowo msindo, kwakuganyakazi lutho. Ngitsho khona ukuthi uzwe iTV, irediyo, amazwi abantu kumbe izisinde lapha endlini.

Sekuzatshaya isikhathi sokudla kwemini, kwezwakala ukuqoqoda kancane emnyango, kwangena umama osebenzayo.

“Ubasi uthe ngibuze ukuthi ungathanda ukudla labo ilantshi na?”

Wathandabuza ukuphendula uLeonard. Kwakungayisikho ukuthi kafuni kudla, kodwa wayecabanga omunye umsebenzi ayefuna ukuwenza eqeda lapha.

“Yebo, ngiyabonga. Ungibongele kubasi. Ngiyeza.”

“Siqonda le,” watsho umama osebenzayo ekhombela indlela ababebuye ngayo. Wamangala uLeonard ukuthi sekuhle kuhanjwa. Esamangele kanjalo wazibonela ukuthi kacelwa, uyatshelwa. Waphakamisa isandla ukuthi kame kancane umama osebenzayo, aqale abuyisele izinto ezithize esikhwameni sakhe umdala. Eqeda lapho wafuqela isitulo sepiyano endaweni yaso waselandela.

Umama osebenzayo waqoqoda komunye weminyango emibili eyinkalakatha. Yomibili yayilamangilazi. Kwezwakala ilizwi eliphezulu lisithi “*Come in,*” andubana umama osebenzayo awuvule umnyango, kodwa angangeni.

Isidudla sendoda yomNdiya sasihlezi ekhanda lethebuli yokudlela, siphethe iforogwe lengqamu. Nansi lenkalakatha yentaba yokudla phambi kwaso. Yayikhanya iyindoda engaba leminyaka engaphezu kwamatshumi amahlanu. Wayeseqala ukubalempabanga ngoba inwele zakhe ezimnyamanyana zasezithe gqa-gqa ekhanda. Ubuso babuyindingilizi. Iyembe yayingakotshelwanga, kukhanya uboya obusesifubeni. Yayijuluka izithukuthuku ebusweni, sezize zivule indlela. Eceleni kwakhe kwakuhlezi umama omude olobuso obucakileyo futhi obomileyo, ongathi ngobomuntu ogugiswe ludubo. Inwele zakhe zazibanjwe zonke, zibotshelwe enkanda. Emganwini wakhe kwakulokudla okungayindawo, lakho ayekudlalisa ngeforogwe engathi uswele ukuthi enzeni. Indoda yeNdiya yamjeqeza kanye uLeonard, yabuyela ekudleni kwayo.

“Yes,” yatsho indoda isesula izandla nge seviyethi, ngemva kokuginya.

“Ngingu Leonard Mwale mnumzana,” watsho eselula isandla elande lindoda.

Yamane wamkhangela nje engathi katshongo lutho uLeonard. Ngitsho khona lokumxhawula.

“Yimi engitshuna amapiyano,” watsho uLeonard ehleka kancane.

“Ah,” yatsho indoda yalapha ekhaya, “ungaphi ubasi wakho?”

“Ubaso? Yimi ubasi. Ngisebenza ngedwa.”

“Kodwa lapha ekhadini,” yatsho indoda ilidobha eduze kwendololwane yayo, “kuthiwa ‘*Thomas Jenkins, Piano Tuners.*’ Ayisilo bizo lakho leli. Libizo lomlungu. Ungaphi umlungu?”

Wahleka uLeonard. Wahleka okomuntu othole into emqumbaqumbayo. “Ah, ubasi Jenkins wasuka kulelizwe kudala. Yimi esengiphethe ibhizinisi, yimi osetshuna amapiyano.”

Indoda ayizange ikubone okuhlekisa uLeonard. “Mmm,” yatsho ingunguna, itshibilikisa ikhadi esandleni. “Umlungu wakupha ibhizinisi yakhe, kumbe wayithenga kuye?”

Lwaphela uhleko kuLeonard. Undoda lo kwakungathi uyamthonisisa ngembuzo yakhe. Wehlisa ilizwi uLeonard, waphendula okwegunya, “Ibhizinisi le wangipha kudala ngo 1965 ngesikhathi ebuyela kibo eNgilandi. Wayesenzela ukuthi kusale kulomuntu eZambia okwaziyo ukutshuna ipiyano.”

“Hmmm? Akula omuny’ umuntu otshunayo?”

Wanikina ikhanda uLeonard. “Bakhona abeza gqo. Kukhona ovela eZimbabwe, kube lomunye ovela eSouth Africa. Labo-ke bayadula okuzwayo.”

Indoda yalapha ekhaya yangathi iyakucabangisisa lokhu ekuzwayo. Yezwakala isithi, “Uyakwazi sibili ukutshuna ipiyano wena? Uyakwazi njengalaba bantu othi basuka eZimbabwe leSouth Africa?”

Wakhangela phansi uLeonard inhloni sezimphethe.

“Yebo mnumzana, ngiyakwazi njengabo.” Wasengezelela ngokuthi, “Kodwa eyami intengo iyingxenye yaleyo abayibizayo.”

Indoda yamkhangela ngalenkulumo uLeonard okwesikhatshana andubana itshibilike ikhulume lomama wenwele zakhe ezibotshiweyo. Ulimi olwalusetshenziswa yindoda lwalulutsha kuLeonard, yikho engadobhanga ngitsho ukuthi indoda ithini. Ithe isiqedile ukukhuluma yakhombela isihlalo esingakwelinye icele letafula, khatshana lendoda lomama wenwele. Wahlala uLeonard ekhangelane lalindoda. Umama osebenzayo wabizwa. Wafika wasusa eduze kwendoda, esandleni sayo sokudla, imethi lokusetshenziswa nxa umuntu esidla, kwabekwa lapho uLeonard ayesetshengiswe ukuthi ahlale khona. Uthe umama osebenzayo ebeka ingilazi yokunathela amanzi eceleni kwendoda, yatsho okunye njalo uLeonard angazange akuzwisise. Waphuma umama osebenzayo waphenduka esephethethi ithambula yeplastiki leya ake wayipha uLeonard aze acele amanzi ekufikeni kwakhe.

“Sokumele ngiye emsebenzini,” yatsho indoda isukuma, ifuqela isitulo emuva. “Ukubhadalela izifundo zakho zokutshaya ipiyano yikho okungenza ngibe matasatasa ewofisini,” yatsho iqondise kumama lo ocakileyo, omude. “Izinto ezinje yizo sibili ezizangibulala isikhathi sami singakafiki.”

Umama okukhulunywa laye zwi. Wayezinathela amanzi mbijana mbijana, ekhangele phambi kwakhe engathi kezwanga lutho. Indoda yavalelisa uLeonard ngokunqekuza ikhanda, yasiphuma ihamba. Ngokuthula, engavalelisanga, lomfazi ocakileyo wasukuma waphuma.

Kwamthatha isikhathi eside ukutshuna ipiyano yalapha ekhaya uLeonard. Wathi lalapho eseqedile wangathatshiswa yindlela u ‘A’ flat ayezwakala endikindiki ngayo. Wahlala phansi waseyitshaya ipiyano okwesikhatshana. Phezu kwepiyano kwakulamaphepha abhalwe amanotsi omculo. Wawaphendla waze wathola ingoma elula kaBeethoven.

“Uyitshaya kamnandi njani ipiyano,” kwatsho ilizwi livelela emnyango. Watshibilika uLeonard wabona ngumama loya akade bebonke ngesikhathi selantshi. Wasukuma uLeonard wakhombela isitulo ukuthi akeze ahlale phansi.

“Woza uzoyitshaya manje, uzwe ukuthi isinjani.”

Wanikina ikhanda umfazi.

“Angikwazi mina. Angikenelisi... kuyangehlula. Ngezake... angeke ngiyitshaye kuhle njengalokhu osanda kukwenza. Mina ngilinyuny. Ipiyano le ngisanda kubalayo.”

Wabobotheka uLeonard wahlala phansi. Waqhubeka etshaya ipiyano, waphetha ngokugabaza, ephosela izandla emoyeni. Umama wasondela, izandla zigoqwe esifubeni, eyame itafula.

“*Very nice, very nice,*” watsho ephindaphinda. “Ngilesifiso sokuthi ngabe lami ngiyitshaya njengawe ipiyano.”

“Awufundi kanti? Awenzi zifundo zokutshaya ipiyano?”

“Awufundisi wena?” wabuza lumama eseledlabuzane. “Ngizakubhadala imali ezwayo, ephindiweyo kulaleyo oyibizayo.”

Wahleka uLeonard. ‘Hatshi, hatshi, angifundisi muntu ukutshaya ipiyano. Mina ngingu matshuna kuphela.’

Eseyiphiwe imali yakhe yokutshuna ipiyano, wayibala kancane kancane, ngesineke esikhulu uLeonard engathi kafuni kuphambanisa ukubala. Eqeda lapho waseqhubela umama walapha ekhaya irisiti. Umqhubela nje, uyabobotheka. Wayikhangela irisiti umama lo, wabala okubhalwe phakathi kwesidindo.

“*Thomas Jenkins, Piano Tuners,*” nguyi lowo, qede wahleka. “*Thank you, Mr Jenkins!*”

ULeonard wabobotheka ngamandla, umlomo waxotsha indlebe. Noma wayebobotheka nje, wayemzwela kakhulu lumama. Wayefana lomuntu olahlekileyo; olahlekele khatshana lekhaya, kungela muntu ongamlayela ukuthi ekhaya kungaphi.

“Lami ngiyabonga,” kwatsho uMwale. “Ungifonele ngemva kwenyanga eziyisithupha.”

Kwadelula iyezi ebusweni bukamama lo. “Masinyane kangaka? Umkami...”

“Umkhathi yiwo ongenza ngitsho njalo. Ngemva kwesikhathi sezulu, ungathola ukuthi ayisatshunekanga njengalokhu okwanamhlanje.”

“Kulungile-ke,” wavuma kodwa kukhanya ukuthi kahlalisekanga ngendaba yokuthi ipiyano ingafuna ukutshunwa njalo ngemva kwesikhathi sezulu.

“Ngiyawehlisela amakhastoma esisebenzelana kuhle,” watsho ebobotheka uLeonard. “Usale kuhle nkosikazi.” Watshibilika waqonda emnyango. Nango unkosikazi emlandela.

“Mr Mwale,” wamemeza, “Udrayiva wami uzakusa ngekhaya. Kahle ngimbize.”

“Ngiyabonga,” waphendula uLeonard. “Ungabe ungisize kakhulu.”

Isimtshiye endlini yakhe yahamba imota, wasala ekhulula ibhatshi, wanatha lamanzi uLeonard. Wahwatsha esikhwameni imali ayeyiphiwe. Kazange wathanda ukumtshela umfazi ocakileyo esesendlini yakhe ukuthi yayingenelanga, ngoba wayesebonile uLeonard ukuthi lapho eyayivele khona, kwakungathambanga.

Imbongi yodumo

Nyevero Muza

UNhamo ngomunye wabalobi abangakaziwa. Kakabi lebizo kwezokuloba. Kalaso isikhathi eseneleyo sokubhala ngenxa yomsebenzi wakhe oyiwo omphilisayo, othatha sonke isikhathi alaso. Esengumfanyana wayebona ikusasa yakhe yokuloba ithe kla okwelanga lehlobo. Wayelethemba lokuthi uyathi ebamba iminyaka engamatshumi amabili ibhuku lakhe lokuqala selidindiwe. Asikafezeki lesisifiso njalo lethemba lokusifeza liya lifiphala.

Uthi nxa ekhangela emuva abone ukuthi ukufisa ukuba ngumlobi yikho okwaphazamisa amathuba akhe okwenza kuhle ezifundweni ze ‘A’ Level. Yikho nje engenelisanga ukungena eyunivesithi. Ukugogodlela isifiso sokuba ngumlobi kwasekusitsho ukuthi wayesencitshe umndeni wakhe ithuba lokuthi ube lesifundiswa sakuqala esifike ezingeni eliphezulu kwezemfundo.

Kodwa kwesinye isikhathi ubona engathi ukwehluleka kwakhe ukungena eyunivesithi kwaba yisibusiso. Waphunyuka ekubeni ngumanjinela, okwakufiswa kakhulu zintanga zakhe. Kwakuthiwa yiwo umsebenzi olemali, engathi imali yikuqala lokucina kwempilo. Ngalezo nsuku wawufuqelwa ukuthi utaditshe izifundo zesayensi ku “A Level,” ikakhulu okwakuthiwa yi M P C (*Maths, Physics, leChemistry*) ukwenzela ukuthi uqeqetshe ube ngumanjinela wamagetsi kumbe umanjinela wezinye izinto nje. Wawukhangela njengomuntu sibili, uhawukelwa nxa indlela yakho iqonde ekubeni ngumanjinela. Kathandabuzi ngitsho uNhamo ukuthi aluba walalela laba ababekakathekisa izifundo zesayensi, ngabe ugqozi lokuba yimbongi lwafa kudala, loma qha njengonkankalu elangeni. Kodwa ngemva kweminyaka eyisificamunwe munye esebenza umsebenzi ongenwa ngo nayini kutshayiswa ngo fayifi, kudala wathwasa wabalilunga lawo wonke umuntu ovuka ekuseni edidizela esiya emsebenzini, avuke alale, aphinde njalo esayizolo. Kodwa kuyehlula ukuthi agqibele ugqozi lobumbongi. Angathola isikhathi uyabhala. Ukubala khona ubala kakhulu okokuthi ngeke utsho ukuthi usebenza ebhenki, lapho asegxile khona impande. Uyithola iyindawo endikindiki ibhenki.

Uhawukela abaziyo ukusebenzisa uqgozi lwabo, abalobayo badindise engathi badla isitshwala. Abantu abanjengo **X**, umlingiswa olomfutho kundatshana asanda kuyibhala uNhamo. Abantu abafana lalomlingiswa wakhe bayaziwa emphakathini, bazikhetha ngobuciko babo obuhle, babukwe ngabantu. Ulethemba uNhamo ukuthi indatshana le ayibhalayo izakwenza abantu babemazi, bakubone ukuthi ulaso isipho sokuloba. Yikho nje esehlala phansi njalo (kasakwazi lokuthi sekungokwesingaki ehlala phansi ebalalindaba) esitadi sakhe, ethebulini eyinkalakatha.

UX wayeyimbongi ethulela abantu inkondlo zayo kwenye indawo yokunathela lokudlela eyayithiwa yi*The Café*. Wayeziphile lelibizo. Laphanga labayilo aziwa ngalo. Lalimenza ehlukane labanye, akhanye phakathi komphakathi. Wayelithanda lelibizo ngoba lihambelana lokuvota, lihambelana lelungelo lomuntu lokukhetha. Ekuqaleni wayecabange ihloka lokugamula, i-“axe”, ngesilungu. Yikho nje wayethi nxa ehaya inkondlo zakhe abelokhu egamula impama yesinye isandla ngecele yempama yesinye. Baqala bemuthi ngu “Axe.” Ngokuya kwesikhathi yena mnikazi webizo walahla u-“e”, kwalandela u-“A”. Ubudlova obabuhambelana lokugamula baphela, kwasala u**X**, owayesitsho izinto ezinengi. Waqonqosela ukuthi ufuna u**X** abhalwe ngamabala amakhulu aqatha, ngoba u**X** wayemele yena, ngoba elesibindi. Walithanda lelibizo waze walihaya kwenye inkondlo. Kwathi lalapho abangane bakhe besithi yikuzigqaja kakhulu lokhu, wangabalaleli. Wayehaya inkondlo yebizo lakhe nxa ezibika enkundleni; eyitsho ngesiLungu. Phela isiLungu lesi yiso ayeloba ngaso abuye agiye ngaso nxa esesitsho inkondlo zakhe:

*Whether it's the ballot
Or the bullet,
X marks the vote
X marks the spot*

Zonke imbongi ezazinjengo**X**, zazihlangana e-*The Café*, okwasekuyiwo umdango wazo. Zazihlangana kanye kumbe kabili ngenyanga, zizogiya, zitsho zihaya zibuye zikhonone ngalokhu lalokhuya. Bathokoze abalaleleyo. Odinga ukukhohlwa inhlungu zempilo wawumthola lapha. Wayethi nxa eseyitsho eyakhe inkondlo u**X** uthole esecimezile, ekhangele phezu, izandla zihambelana lakutshoyo. Amazwi ayewakhafula ayebukhali okwengqamu engathi igwaza wona umthambo omkhulu emphinjeni. Lwaluthi selumfikele sibili ugqozi uthole engathi ikhona ingoma ayizwayo, ayigidayo ekhanda. Kwesinye isikhathi ingoma le yayingezothileyo, umbone enyikinyeka kancane kancane. Kanti kwesinye

isikhathi kube ngetshetshayo, elamadlabuzane; uthole esedladlazela, eklabalala engathi uyakhanywa.

Imbongi zonke zazilenwele zamaRasta ezingamahlahla. Kwasekungathi lezi nwele luphawu lokuthwasiswa kwabo, ukuthi sebangena kwelobumbongi lapho owawuzwa beqamba khona amabala aqatha afana labo “*alliteration*,” o “*cossonance*” labo “*assonance*.” Inwele lezi ezingamahlahla kwakungasinwele nje kuX; zaziyingxenyeye yokugiya kwakhe. Wawuzibona zisithi yabu-yabu zihambelana lokunqekuzwa kwakhe ikhanda. Kuthi nxa ziyabuzela kanje, ngemva kwakhe kulamabala abomvu abhalwe *POETRY SLAM*, ubone into yamehlo!

Ababembona egiya uX, bangakutshela ukuthi esesenza into yakhe, amazwi akhe ayefana lobulembu besayobe – wayekugola ngamazwi uzithole usuganxele. Amazwi akhe ayegwaza emahlabankomo. Emdangweni, lowo lalowo muntu wayelakho ukutsho eyakhe inkondlo, ezinye zibunjwa khonapho khonapho. Lokuthi inkondlo ithini kwakungelandaba ngoba umuntu wonke ekhululekile ukutsho akuzwayo. Kodwa okwakuzakwenzakala ngemva kokutsho inkondlo, akulamuntu owayengatsho.

Kwakungakhathalekile ukuthi yini ehaywa zimbongi emdangweni. Kodwa inkondlo zikaX ezinengi zazimayelana lempi yenkululeko. Wayesola indlela injongo yalempi eyasuka yaphithikezwa ngamagola asembusweni – inkokheli ezathi ngokungena embusweni zabangamahaga, zadla zodwa. Kwakuthi-ke nxa eseyitsho inkondlo yakhe ethiwa ‘*Struggle for Hire*’, ivungame inkundla, ihlanye, imqage, imvumele uzwe sekuyibu “*Ahoy! Ahoy! Ahoy!*”

*This struggle is a muddle
It does nothing but fumble
Infiltrated and annihilated
Privatised and commodified
Oh, it's a trivial commercial pursuit*

*This struggle has lost its sparkle
Once a rumble in the jungle
It's now petrified and pacified
Denatured and domesticated
Resistance in this instance
No longer a nuisance to malfeasance*

This struggle is at a stand still

*It's grist for greed's mill
This struggle is for hire
It needs some fire, not just any fire
But **more** fire!*

Ukuvuthwa kwenkundla lomdlandla wembongi kwakubika ukubambisana indlela; indlela eyayisaziwa ngamacele omabili. Esikhathini esinengi uX wayesitsho ezakhe inkondlo kuthi lapha lalapho atsho ezabanye ezifana lo 'Still I Rise' oka Maya Angelou lo 'A Dream Deferred' oka Langston Hughes. Lezinkondlo yizo ayezithanda kakhulu. Wayetsho uX ukuthi kafuni kufela ulutho oluthize, kodwa nxa ezafela ukukhuluma akukholwayo, wayezimisele. Wayezazinekela.

Wayethi yena "inkondlo ayibhaxisi, ayihlali phezu kothango futhi ayikhulumi ngemizwa engaphathelananga lobuzima bempilo. Inkondlo ezwayo ngoyithola isilwa, iginqe tshitshi njalo ibhuqe yangcola." Yikho ezakhe inkondlo zazingezestradini, lapho ezazisilwa khona lenkethabetshabi, ukungazi, lobuvila bokwenza into umuntu akwaziyo ukuthi yiyo eqondileyo. Ezakhe zazibuza imbuzo engathambanga, eyangisa abasembusweni, imbuzo enqunulayo. Wayesipha umzekeliso athi: nxa uke wabona umntwana olala estradini efake ikhala elilenga amakhovula ewindini lemota yakho, ecela imali kumbe ukudla, kungaba ngenye yezinkondlo zakhe. Ngoba ekholwa ukuthi inkondlo iyaphathisa ekuphileni njalo ethanda ukusebenzisa i-internet, wacina esevumbulule umbhalo omfitshane oka Audre Lorde othiwa "Poetry is Not A Luxury." Kusukela lapho, wayesehlala esithi, "inkondlo yisibane; ngoba yiyo epha imizwa lemicabango yethu amagama."

Uthe esiba leminyaka engamatshumi amabili lambili, uX wayeselodumo olukhulu e-*The Café*. Kwakulula ukumthanda. Wawungamthandela ukuzinekelwa kwakhe ekubeni yimbongi, kumbe umthandele ukuthi ukugxanguza kwakhe kwakungokukhangayo. Abantu bonke babevumelana ukuthi angaqhubeka ngaloluhlobo uX, uzakuba yimbongi edume langaphetsheya kolwandle, ahaye inkondlo zakhe emdangweni ofana le *Grand Slam de Poesie*.

Into eyayimudla kakhulu yikuthi inkondlo zakhe zonke wayezibhala azitsho ngesiLungu, hatshi ngolimi lwakhe lokuzalwa. Ngelinye ilanga esinye sezifundiswa esasise *The Café* sasikhuluma ngomlandu wokusebensisa ulimi umuntu azalwa elukhuluma. Satsho isifundiswa sisekela langokwakukhulunywe yimbongi edumileyo u T.S. Elliot. Okwesikhatshana waqala ukubhala lokutsho inkondlo zakhe ngolimi lwakibo u X. Kodwa kwakusobala kuloba ngubani ukuthi inkondlo lezi zazingela mfutho ngitsho. Kwakuyimbambangamandla nje. Uthe esebuyela

esiLungwini waziduduza ngokuthi zazinengi imbongi ezazisebenzisa ulimi lwakibo, njalo zisenza umsebenzi ongcono kulaye.

UX wayengomunye wentanga ethiwa ngama “*Born Free*” – kutshiwo abazalwa ngemva kwenkululeko yelizwe ngo 1980. Impi wayengayazi lokuthi iyini. Wayecaphula uyise ngokuthi wayengasiboni isizatho sokube kukhulunywa ngempi eyayisileminyaka engamatshumi amathathu yedlula.

“Kanti kungani ikhanda lakho lihlala ligcwele impi yakudala?” Wake wambuza uyise ngelinye ilanga, wengezelela esithi, “futhi nxa ikulethela imikhumbulo emibi, yindaba ufuna ukuhlala uyikhumbula?”

“Mtanami, ukuxola kulula, kodwa ukukhohlwa – ngitsho.” Kwaba yimpendulo kayise, ephendula umbuzo ayebona ungowokugolomba, owobumbulu.

Wayevuma uX ukuthi yebo, impi yenkululeko yayiqakathekile sibili. Kodwa wayesephakathi kwempi enzima ukwedlula eyenkululeko; eyakhe kwasekuyimpi yokuphila, mihla lemiha. Wayethi nxa ekhangele amapikitsha abazali bakhe awama 1960 lama 1970 abone ukuthi babengabantu, bezinzile ngendlela owawungeke uyibone ngensuku ayeseiphila ngazo yena. Ngezinye izikhathi uyise wayelimuka esevumile ukuthi impilo yakudala yayimnandi – imali kwakuyimali labangane bengabangane.

“Baba, okwakwehlelayo labanye bakho, ngiyakholwa ukuthi kwenzakala sibili. Kodwa indlela elitshona lisithi sikhonze ubuhlungu elabuzwayo ngayo, yiyo enza thina intsha sibone engathi okwenzakala kuni akulamsebenzi lathi namhlanje.” NguX lowo eqondise kuyise ngelinye ilanga.

“Mtanami, ngumlandu wethu ukulibonisa lina abatsha ukuthi inkululeko le ayizanga kalula, lingabodlala ngayo. Kwachitheka igazi elinengi ukuthi ibekhona.” Watsho uyise ephendula ngelipholileyo.

Uthe ebona uX ukuthi indaba isisiya ngaphi wasedinga ukuyiquma masinyane.

“Ngiyazi baba, ngoba kunini uyitsho lento. Kubhaliwe futhi lemabhukwini e*History*, kuliqiniso. Kodwa ngingaze ngifise kanjani ukuzwa elalikuzwa, ukubona elalikubona, ngingezake ngibe lendlebe zenu lamehlo enu. Kumele ukwamukele ukuthi okwakuqakathekile kudala akusaqakathekanga khathesi. Leyo laleyo ntanga kumele ilwe izimpi zayo.” Watsho uX, okomuntu othi ayiphelele lapha.

Njengabanengi ayelabo empini, uyise kaX wayelipholisa. Wayethi nxa ekhuluma ngoyise uX ambize ngokuthi li “*Ngonjo*’. Lelo bizo wayelisebenzisa nxa uyise engekho. Nxa ekhona, wayembiza esithi ‘Woveti’. Nyanga zonke uyise wayesilwa impi yokuthi kudliwe lapha

ekhaya ngoba imali ingasathengi lutho. Alwe lempi yokuthola imali yamagetsi lamanzi, okwasekudula okwamagama, kodwa amagetsi etshona ecitshiwe, lamanzi evaliwe. Ubuzima bempilo benza ukuthi abazali bakhe batshone belwile. Uyise wayehlala ethule okwezulu elithweleyo. Kwakuthi lingathwala kakhulu athi lothu aye komunye umfazi. Kwezinye izikhathi wayefobha umkakhe, umthole evuvukile kodwa ngitsho ukuthi atshiye. Uzwe esithi, “Amadoda vele yizinja. Yimvelo yabo ukugijimisa iziketi njalo yimvelo yabo ukuphenduka ngekhaya, noma kusitsho ukuthi sebephelelwe ngumphako, sebelande ukuzofela khona.” Uyise wayehamba athi nya, okwamalanga athize. Athi esephenduka axolise angani angaze aguqe phansi ngamadolo. Wayephenduka eselunge okumangalisayo. Wawungeke utsho ukuthi nguye owayelolaka lonke loluya, engalutho lokucaphuka. Umfazi lo owayemhlanyisa wayelipholisa laye. Umkamama lo wayefele empini eDRC. UnakaX wayesenza engani ayikho le “*small house*.” Ukudana lokuzonda kwakhe kwakuphelela ekubalekeleni amapholisa ayebopha omama abathengisayo lapha elokitshini.

“Uyazi, amapholisa la ngamalema. Batshona besixotshanisa nxa besejutini. Kodwa nxa sebetshayisile uzababona kunyakunya bezothenga kithi.” NgunakaX ekhonona ngelinye ilanga, ewahleka lokuwahleka amapholisa.

Unina esilwa ezakhe izimpi, uX laye wayesilwa eyakhe eyokuthi atshiyane lezolo yabazali bakhe eyayisihlezi entanyeni yakhe sasihitshela. Ukuphunyuka kuleso sihitshela kwamthola engalindele, ezimele ewindini elalifile, ekamelweni lakhe. Umi nje ukhangele udlakela oluphandle olwaluzavungama lulumathise ilokitshi lonke. Intuthu ehitshayo, *iteargas*, yayisiqala ukunuka lapho ami khona. Khathsha le, ekuyeni ngeZimbabwe Grounds, lapho abakhononayo ababebuthane khona, yayisivimbile intuthu. Emi ewindini lakhe uX, wayezibuza imibuzo eminengi.

Wayengakaze akucabange ukuthi ngelinye ilanga ukuxokozela kwabantu besola umumo wezinto elizweni kungaba selokitshini lakhe le‘*Fio*’. Wayevele wakucabanga mandulo ukuthi mhla kusenzeka lokhu, wayezakwenzani. Kodwa esekhangelane lakho kanje, wezwa efikelwa yikwesaba okukhulu. Kwakulula ukuthi umuntu akhulume ngokulwela inkululeko, kuthungelwa imililo emdangweni, ucatshe e-*The Café*. Kodwa nxa impi yakhona isiphambi kwakho, isingangena ngitsho lendlini yakho, kutshiyene. Kwasekusobala ukuthi ngasikhatshana nje intuthu yeteargas izagcwala lapha endlini. Wabona kungcono ukuphuma ayihlangabeze. Wathatha ithawulo yakhe emanzi ngoba esanda kugeza, waphuma. Okwakumfuqa yinkondlo ayesanda kuyibhala, eyibhale ephepheni ayeligoqe kahle waselifaka esikhwameni sebhulugwe esangemuva. Wayetshiseka

ukuthi ayeyitsho lapho okwakulwiwa khona. Wayezitshele ukuthi noma kanjani, uzathola indlela yokuthi abantu bamlalele.

Kwakumnyamanyana endlini ngoba unakaX wayevale amawindi lamakhetheni wonke, wakhiya lezivalo ukuthi kukhanye engathi akulamuntu. Uthe esiyaphuma, unina wamkhangela ngelokhozi.

“Uyangaphi izinto zinje? Awuboni ukuthi kwenzakalani phandle? Yindaba ungami kuqale kudlule lokhu?” Zikhathi zonke, yayiselekana kanje imibuzo kanina. Yikho waze waphiwa ibizo lokuthi ngu ‘PP’ – ‘Public Prosecutor’. “Ithawulo yakho leyo ayilamasalamusi. Uzafihla amehlo kuphela ukuthi *iteargas* ingakuphandli kakhulu. Kodwa kulembhobho; imbhobho sibili hatshi iziphamaso zokudlalisa,” ngunina lowo emkhuza.

“Mama, akulambhobho ozadutshulwa ngoba asikho empini lapha. Kumele ngiphume khathesi ngoba namhlanje sithakazelela ukubunjwa kwePoetry Slam. Lawe uyazi ukuthi kumele ngibekhona.” Wayesitsho esithi mfe, kodwa unina wayengelandlela yokwazi lokhu. Ngabe wayesazi sibili injongo yomntanakhe, wayezavimba ngazozonke indlela ukuthi angaphumi endlini. Ayekwazi yikuthi indodana yakhe le eyodwa yimbongi; lokuthi uyakuthanda kakhulu umtanakhe ukuba yimbongi. Wayemuzwa kwesinye isikhathi esitsho inkondlo zakhe ekamelweni lakhe kumbe ngemva kwendlu, kwesinye isikhathi phakathi kobusuku. Uthe ebona ukuthi ngezake amvimbele umtanakhe endlini, wamupha ikhiye, emqonqosela: “Uqaphele mtanami, futhi uphenduke masinyane ngekhaya.”

Uthe ephuma nje igedi uX, umnuko *weteargas* wamvathuza emakhaleni, waphosa wahlanza. Weqa isifudlana samanzi esititshi esidubukileyo ayenuka phu. Amanzi la ayesengokungamachitshana emagodigodini ayesevuleke umgwaqo wonke. Indawo yonke nje kwasekulezifudlana zala manzi ezazigeleza zibhoda eceleni kwenqwaba zedoti eyayingabuthwanga nguManisipala. Kwakuthi engavalwa amanzi, ingcekeza esemaphayiphini ibe yinkalakatha yamadundulu. Kuthi nxa amanzi angavulwa amadundulu la afuqe izivalo zezititshi uthole sekutumuma amanzi ekaka, ageleze emgwaqweni, emayadini abantu kunye lengadini zabo. Sezibonile ukuthi akukho owayezazisiza ngale doti, izakhamizi zasezigezibha imigelo ephambula amanzi ekaka ukuthi angami kwawabo amayadi. Umakhelwane laye wayesenza okufanayo, agebhe owakhe umfelo obisela amanzi lapho avela khona!

Eseqonde eZimbabwe Grounds, uX wakubona sobala ukuthi izinto zasezitshintshile. Kwakungasaphileki njengensukwini ezazisanda kwedlula. Khathesi, udubo lwaselumdinga lumthole umuntu kukanti ekuqaleni wawungaludinga uluswele. Lwaseluhele indawo yonke udubo. Isizinkobe ezilamatshe impilo. Yikho okwenza uX wezwa esesaba.

Noma nje wayesizwa ukuthi kukhona okungasoze kuhambe kuhle ngalelo langa, kwakukhona okwakumtshotshozela ngasikhathi sinye. Esezafika enkundleni ye Zimbabwe Grounds, iziqa zengoma ye U2 ethiwa ‘*Sunday, Bloody Sunday*’ zalela ekhanda lakhe. Wayezizwa leziginci zakhona, zikhala okwengoma yesisotsheni nxa kumatshwa kumbe kuyiwa empini. Ukuthi aziqinise wazithola esehlabela ivesi ayeyikhumbula, sekungathi uphakathi kwefilimu eyesabisayo okuthiwa yi*horror*:

*Cause tonight we can be as one...
Bodies strewn across the dead end street
Sunday Bloody Sunday
And the battle's just begun
There's many lost but tell me who has won?*

Isisindo salokho okwakutshiwo yingoma wayengasiboni ngitsho ngaleso sikhathi. Ayekucabanga nje yikuthi ngelinye ilanga uzayisebenzisa lingoma, ikhalele phansi yena esitsho inkondlo yakhe eyayisivele igiga ekhanda.

Sonaleso sikhathi ekowakhe umhlaba uX, ebhala inkondlo ekhanda, wathi uthi bhode ekhoneni lomgwaqo, ngqwangqwa lamapholisa erayothi – la achitha imibuthano. Abanye babethwele imiqwayi eqatha, abanye imibhobho, abanye belengise izigxinganyana zeteargas enqulwini. Wakhangela phansi, waqhubeka ehamba okomuntu oziyela nje kwenye indawo ngaphandle kweZimbabwe Grounds. Omunye wamapholisa – kasananzelelanga ukuthi wuphi wakhona – wakhwaza wathi, “Heyi mfana, buyela ngekhaya. Ukhansiliwe umhlangano.”

Wahle wazi uX ukuthi nxa ipholisa likhuluma ngalendlela litshoni. Angithi vele ipholisa lingakutshela ukuthi hamba kumele wenze njalo. Watshibilika-ke ebuyela emuva, egijima kancane, enganyemukuli. Uthe esebucwadelana wathi jeqe, wawabona amapholisa esezihlekela, esekhohliwe langaye. Wabona ukuthi babehleka okunye okungekho lapho. Kwakusobala futhi ukuthi abafuni kulwa lomuntu. Babelapho ngoba kumele babelapho. Wasethatha enye indlela uX eyayizabhoda imuse enkundleni engabonwanga ngamapholisa la.

Watshitsha, wakhohlwa ngokumiswa kwakhe ngamapholisa. Uhaluzela nje uthiye indlebe ukuthi azwe okwakusenzakala enkundleni. Impembe yayizwakala. Yayimbiza ukuthi azokuba yingxenywe yabantu abazahlala bekhunjulwa ngoba beguqule izinto zabangcono kulelilizwe. Kwasekumalela ukuthi atshitshe kuphela. Wayesethotha. Wezwa lomsindo wemota zamapholisa. Wathi lanxa eseginqa kwaba ngenxa yokuthi kwakutshisa njalo uvalo lumbhula.

Loba wayesesekhathana uX, okwakukhwazwa ngabantu kanyekanye wayekuzwa kuhle. Dukuduku, abantu laba ababekhwaza thutshu. Kungesi muntu, kungathi yinkalakatha yegagasi lizomkhukhula. Wakubona ukuthi lababantu bayabaleka. Okwesikhatshana wacitshelwa, wama mpo sasikhonkwane ekhangele leligagasi labantu abahlabelayo lisiza kuye. Wezwa leligagasi limphakamisa, limusa emayezini njengalokhu ayekuzwe nxa inkundla isimutsho emdangweni. Samuntu owayevele ebamelele, watshibilika wabancedisa ukutshaya itoyitoyi. Wayesephambili manje, sebeqonde khona kanye aphendukiswe khona ngamapholisa lawana ayehlangane lawo ekuqaleni. Wamangala abantu bekwaza ngemva kwakhe, bejabulela idlabuzane abaxhuma ngalo, kunye lepikitsha kaMalcolm X eyayisemhlane wesikipa sakhe.

IFiyo yayivele idumile njengendawo okwakuqala khona izimpi zokuzikhulula. Kwasekunjalo lamzwalokho; sokugcwele intuthu yento ezitshayo kunye *leyeteargas*. Kwasekungathi kusempini, ontanga sebethethe iloba yini bavala imigwaqo. Kwasekufana leminyane imifanekiso yendawo okulwiwa khona eyayibonakale kuTV. Imota zokuchithiza abantu zasezixotshanisa abantu, zibathela ngamanzi alamandla amakhulu. Abanye babethi bengadutshuzwa ngamanzi la bame, abanye bagijime bayecatsha ngemva kwemiduli. *Iteargas* yayilokhe iphoswa, uzwe ingathi itshaya umlozwi emoyeni, ilandela ababalekayo. Abanye babesima, badobhe amatshe, izigodo, izitina, amambodlela afileyo, amabhimu – ingqe yini ababeyithola. Ezinye izigxingana *zeteargas* zaziphanga zigoqelwe ngelembu elimanzi, zifuthwe zibuyiselwa emapholiseni.

Wayesephunywe lidlozi manje uX; ephosa amatshe, ekhwaza labanye, ehlabela lengoma ayengakaze azizwe kumbe azihlebele. Ukwesaba lokhuya ayeke wakuzwa ekuqaleni kwasekunyamalele okwamazolo exotshwa lilanga. Endaweni yokwesaba waba lesibindi lokuzonda – kwaphuphuma kokubili. Isikhathi ayekade wasilinda sasesifikile. Kwakungasadingeki ukuthi atsho inkondlo; wayeseyiyo ngokwayo, sibisayo.

Amapholisa ayeme afola emgwaqweni, aphakamisa amahawu awo acazimulayo, kwaba yiwo umduli wokuzivikela ebantwini ababezowahlasela. Kwakhanya ukuthi bazimisele futhi abathandabuzi abantu kulokhu ababekuhlosile. Ebona lokhu, ethuka amapholisa. Azibonela ukuthi kuyafiwa lapha, angalala yiwo inyama. Omunye wawo wadubula emoyeni ukwethusa abantu, wabuye wabazisa ukuthi bachitheke. Ngitsho ukuthi bakunake lokho abantu. Basebenukelwa yikuwadlithiza amapholisa. Umadubula esithi abantu abachitheke, wayesehlahle amehlo. Nanko phela babelokhu besiza lababantu. Wabona amakhulu lamakhulu amehlo angathi ngawezilwane ezilambileyo sezibone inyama.

UX waphosa isibhakela emoyeni ngokuzonda. Wayefumbethe ilitshe. Wasikhulula isibhamu umpholisa. Umdumo lohlamvu kwamtshaya sikhathi sinye uX. Wathi votshololo phansi kwahle kwagcwala igazi lapho awela khona. Ekuxokozeleni okwalandelayo abantu badlula bemnyathela. Igazi likaX elalinamathele ngaphansi kwezicathulo zabo lasala libhalile ethareni.

Kwathi ngemva kwesikhathi, omunye umuntu wembesa uX ebusweni ngebhatshi lakhe, wasekhwathaza ezikhwameni ukuthi athole okwakungatsho ukuthi lomuntu ngubani, okunjengesithupha. Akutholayo liphethana leliya uX ayebhalele kulo inkondlo yakhe. Lalilokhe lisesikhwameni sangemuva sebhulugwe noma nje laselilegazi. Undoda lo waqala ukuyibala linkondlo, kancane kancane ukwenzela ukuthi amagama ayo abeisisindo esihambelana lesimo esasiphambi kwabo. Waphakamisa ilizwi lapho ebal, ukuthi abantu asebebuthe bayizwe leyo nkondlo. Wayifunda lundoda izandla ziqhaqhazela, inyembezi zithontela ephepheni:

*There is a scar on my soul
Etched by hit men in unmarked cars
Who arrive unceremoniously to disturb pre-dawn peace
To abduct my weary dreams
Ruthlessly shaking them wide-awake
In the dead of the night*

*There is a scar on my soul
Inflicted by black-suited, bloodshot-eyed terror,
That force-marches thoughts of freedom into grass-
thatched hearts
And burns them alive*

*There is a scar on my soul
Where free speech digs its own shallow grave,
And lies in it to await silent death.
And freedom lies down
And submits to sjamboks and iron bars*

*Repeatedly thrashed under the feet
This vision is all bloodied and walks with a heavy limp,
It is slowly going nowhere in particular
And its footsteps are scars on my soul*

Kwathi ekucineni kwenkondlo, uX wayebhale usuku, inyanga lomnyaka, wasefaka inkalakatha kaX ngaphansi.

Singazi ukuthi ngoba wayekele umlingiswa uX wafa, kumbe njalo kuyikudinga umfutho onjengokaX, uNhamo waba ngosehlala ese*The Café*. Wayefunga esithi wayengaboni mahluko phakathi kwakhe lomlingiswa wakhe uX. Yikho nje ngelinye ilanga watsho inkondlo emdangweni. Ibandla alizange lithi kaphume enkundleni. Kodwa ngokuba ndikindiki kobuso babantu, kwamkhanyela ukuthi ngitsho loyedwa owayezwisisa ukuthi uqonde ukwenzani. Kwabayikho ukubuyela kwakhe empilweni yakhe endikindiki, impilo eyayingeke yafa yabalomfutho njengeyomlingiswa wakhe.

Ngedwa

Fungai Rufaro Machirori

Ngikhangele iqhubu elivuthiweyo, elilobomvu, elingathi lilochago. Lithe qotshotsho kundebe yakhe yangaphezulu. Ngitshaywe luvalo nxa ngicabanga ukuthi angathi sondeli kancane kimi efuna ukungiqabuza, ngizakuthini.

Uphethe uyalawula, uphatha le ayitshiye, adobhe enye. Zinengi izinto akhuluma ngazo – ukungahambi kahle kwebhizimisi osekusenza abone kungcono ukuthi akazame ukuyisa eKenya kumbe eNigeria, kumbe kwelinye ilizwe elisenyakatho ukwenzela ukuthi athole inzuzo engcono.

Ngilalele ngeyodwa; ngiyamzwela nje khonokho okungatsho lutho. Into esithe kho engqondweni yami liqhubu lakhe leli elesabekayo, elilingana lekhandla lephini yokupeneda izigqoko. Ngileqiniso ukuthi ngingalithinta ngezami indebe, lizahle lithi puntshu! Lingapuntshukela emlonyeni wami ke? Lingaphuma igazi, besengilizwa emlonyeni wami?

Ayintantalazi nje imicabango engqodweni yami – ilomuntu phansi. Ungathi ngamaphistoni enjini afakwe i-oyili yazwela sibili.

UMildred angahleka afe ngingamtshela ngale micabango yami. Angithi nguye owangipha ibizo wathi ngingu “*OCD Olivia*,” ngoba ngithanda ukucubungula zonke izinto ukwedlula abanye abantu; qede ngifise ukuthi ngazingesinye isimo hatshi leso eziyiso. Nxa izinto zakhona zingasamanga njengokubona lokufisa kwami, ngangiphange ngigcwalelane ngokuzonda, kumbe ngifikelwe yikwethuka lokwesaba okukhulu. Yikho nje mhla wosuku lwami lokuzalwa, ngithakazelela iminyaka engamatshumi amabili lasikhombisa wabhala ekhadini le*birth day* wathi: “*My dear Obsessive Compulsive Disordered Olivia, Ngithemba ukuthi iminyaka ezayo izabangcono kulemilutshwane le oyichithe ungaqondakali ukuthi uyisima kanjani!!!*” Yikho sibili lokho akubhalayo, ngesikhesivi sakhe esigoqela khatshana amabala. Kwathi ekucineni, lapho ayefake khona uphawu lwesibabazo waze waphinda kathathu, endaweni yechatha ngaphansi wadweba ubuso obungihlekayo.

Igama angikhandela lona lahle labamba.

Sekuleminyaka kusukela ngelanga lekhadi le *birth day*. Uyatsho uMildred uthi i-“*OCD*” yami yiyo kanye engibeka kulesisimo engikuso – angilamntwana, angendanga; ngilugebhezi nje! Okwami akujayelekanga. Kuthi lanxa ngibeka amagabha enamnede efrijini, amabala awo kumele akhangele emnyango, atsheke kancane afole elandelana ngendlela enza kube lula ukubala okubhalwe kuwo. Lokutsheka kwakhona sengaze ngakuthola ukuthi kumele kube yi *45 degrees*. Lanxa ngilala, angilali eceleni lombheda elilodwa amalanga elandelana. Ngiyawantshintshanisa amacele ombheda singekho isizatho esingazwisiswa ngumuntu, ngaphandle kokuthi yikho lokhu engikwejayeleyo. Ngiphila lona ivangeli lenkululeko yabomama. Yikho ngingavumi ukuthi nxa sisendaweni yokudlela indoda kube yiyo ebhadala imali yonke. Lami ngifuna ukukhupha ingxenye yaleyo mali. Ngikusimo engikuso ngoba ngilamakhethe nxa sekusiza emadodeni. Kukanti vele angidingi ndoda. Namhlanje, leliqhubu likaPhilemon selihle lawucitsha umcabango wokuba lendoda. Esengikubona liqhubu lakhe kuphela.

Kodwa ayisikho kuthi ngithanda ukucubungula yonke into, kumbe ukuthi ngilomkhuhlane wengqondo owokwenyanya izinto ezithile – engikufunayo lengikufisayo yikuthi izinto zihambe ngendlela engiyifunayo, kube yimi engiqondisa into yonke ukuthi iyengaphi, hatshi ukuba ngumalandela.

Ngingumfazi ozisebenzelayo, oseleminyaka engamatshumi amathathu lanhlanu futhi yonke into engilayo ibiza mina, ngazithengela. Ngaleyo ndlela ngilalo lonke ilungelo lokwenza izinto ngeyami indlela, kungakhathalekile ukuthi ubani uthini.

Loba kunjalo, amagama kaMildred kawavikeki sonke isikhathi. Kwesinye isikhathi athi nama engqondweni yami engathi afakwe iglu kumbe abanjwa ngamaphini okunamanthisela izinto ehofisini – amaphini alamakhanda abomvu, lalithanga; amaphini alombala ongafani leqhubu lika Philemon elilithube. Yilo eselisengqondweni yami futhi.

Uphethe uyakhuluma, ngitsho lokuthi athule kancane, engathi kakwazi ngitsho ukuthi uleqhubu elinje. Nango phela ushevele, wagqoka, wazohlangana lami, ngitsho ukukabone ukuthi uleqhubu elenyanyeka kangaka lapho ezibuka esibukweni?

Kumele abe elibonile. Walibona ukuthi liyenanyanisa – nanku phela kungathi lilo chago oluhlobileyo. Kambe ukuthi kalizwa litshotshozela, ukuthi likhona? Kumele libe lidikiza iqhubu leli, limbikela ukuthi likhona, likhula ngokutshetsha, liphehla ubomvu.

Ngicine ngokuzitshela ukuthi kalandaba lalo futhi uthembe ukuthi lami angisoze ngilinake.

“So, yah, yikho esengifuna ukukwenza manje. Uzabona!” Ahleke engathi uyakhwehlela andubana akhangele ngewindiskrini. Ukhangele umnyama ophandle okhanyiswa lapha lalaphaya ngamalayithi esitaladeni, akhanyisa okungayindawo. Izidlonono ziphethe zibanga umsindo. Akula omunye umsindo.

Sengithwele anzima. Angisafuni ukuba sejele. Ngithi ngifaka isandla lapho okuthanciswa khona ibhanti lesihlalo, atshibilike masinya uPhilemon angikhangele. Khonokho nje kuthi dlwe ukuthi ulindele ukuthi ngimqabuze sibili, imilomo yethu ingenane ngicine sengimunya iqhubu lakhe eselingikhathaze amahola amabili adlulileyo!

Ulethemba sibili lokuthi ngizamqabuzwa. Nango phela esefaka isandla sakhe phezu kwesami! Yinkalakatha yesandla engathi ngamaglovisi kagore webhola. Nxa engithinta ungathi liphepha leli elisetshenziswa ngamatisha nxa besenza amatshathi okufaka emdulini weklasi, elithiwa yimani. Yilo phepha ebengilisebenzisa ekwenzeni amanye amakhadi azangiphathisa emsebenzini. Ngecele yelihlo ngiwabone awakhe edinga awami.

Ngale ukuwavusa awami, ngiqhubeke ngikhangele phansi lapho engibala khona ngize ngiphindaphinde ibala elithi “*Press*” endaweni ependwe ngombala obomvu. Sengifisa ukuthi ngilifotoze ngiqonge ngiphume ngophahla lwemota njengomtshayeli wendizamtshina othi angabona indizamtshina isizakutsha, afotoze eceleni kwesihlalo sakhe atshoke aphume ngaphezulu, ayitshiye isisitsha indiza.

Asondele eduze kwami uPhilemon, enganaki ngitsho ukuthi sengitshotshobe. Masinyane nje, engalindele, ngifotoze isikopela sebhanti lesihlalo.

“Mana!”

Ethuke ngoba engalindelanga ukuzwa ngisitsho njalo, abuyele muva.

“Angi... sondelelani kakhulu lomuntu engisanda kumazi, ngelanga lokuqala. Ngiyaxolisa nxa ngikwethusile.”

Ilizwi lami alisajayeleki.

“Hawu. Ok.” Nguye lowo engathi uyanyenyeza, okomuntu odanileyo. Ngasikhathi sinye ngizwe umoya onukelelayo we *menthol* uphuma emlonyeni wakhe. Sonke lesi sikhathi bengingawuzwa.

Uke wakhuluma futhi ngalelizwi lodanileyo ngesikhathi sekumele sibhadale ukudla. Bengimtshele ngathi kumele siyidabule phakathi, ngokulingeneyo indleko yakhona. Bengikhuluma okukadokotela oyingcitshi ekuhlinzeni abantu. Isikhathi sokukhuluma ngebhili kube ngesinye sezikhathi ezimbalwa zokuhlanganisa amehlo laye, ngisesaba ukuthi iqhubu lakhe lizangenyanyisa ngihlanze.

Uyadelela lumuntu ngokungithwalisa nzima kangaka! Angithi bekumele akhethe elinye ilanga iqhubu lakhe selingasekho. Ukudelela kwakhe kwedlula amalawulo. Acabange ukuthi ngingamqabuza sibili leqhubu lakhe leli? Ngifikelwe yikuthukuthela okumangalisayo ngenxa yalokhu.

Esadidekile enjalo, abuyisele izandla zakhe esidirayivweni esibuthakathaka. Aluba ubuso bakhe lobu obungathi yisikhumba sendlovu abuginqanga, bengizamhlaba ngempama. Abonge khona nje ukuthi angifuni kusuka senginamathelwe yizinambuzane ezisemaginqweni akhe.

“Ulale kuhle,” ngitsho ngikhangele umnyango oseceleni kwami, futhi ngiwuvula. “Esikhathini esizayo ubonanzelela amaqhubu afana laleli elisemlonyeni wakho. Uthathe *igarlic* ulihlikihle ngayo okwesikhatshana. Nxa lingala ukuphela, utshintshe ilanga lokuhlangana lentombi! Ngihle ngadakeka ngokulibona!”

Ngitshayebele isivalo semota. Yimi loya ngitshitsha. Noma besitsho ukuthi amanye amadoda kayangeki, angiboni ukuthi lo wayezazama lokukhuluma lami futhi.

Amabele ami abuthakathaka. Hatshi lobuya buthakathaka okukhulunywa ngabo nxa isithandwa sichaza esikuzwayo lapho sibamba ibele lentombazana. Angitsho ubutofotofo bobutsha ongahle ubhale ngabo inkondlo.

Amabele ami abuthakathaka okwesitshwala esilula esingacuphekiyo, ongeke usibumbe utshebe ngaso umsobho wesitshebo sakho. Ayimboza.

Lesisu sami sesilenga, sesikhaphazela phakathi laphakathi kwesifuba lemilenze.

Isibuko kasiqambi manga. Ngezake usifumbathise imali ukuthi siqambe amanga. Njengami kwesinye isikhathi, sitsho esikutshoyo singelandaba lokuthi singakwephula inhliziyi ngokukutshela iqiniso.

Ubunqunu bami bungenza ngizame ukucabanga ukuthi kunini ngacina ukubonwa ngomunye umuntu ngibhunyumunyu. Inyanga zakhona zichaphela ngale kweminwe yonke yezandla zombili. Sekungumnyaka olenyanga ezintathu.

Kunzima ukuthi ngitsho ukuthi inguquko le engiyibona emzimbeni wami iqale nini ngoba engekho ongibukayo nginqunu lami ngimbuke. Osekusele yikuthi ngivume ukuthi isibuko asiqambi manga. Sokungificile ukuguga ngingananzelele. Kwenzakala ngaphansi kwezigqoko, ngingakuboni.

Ngicabange uSimba.

Wawazi lo mzimba wami amabele esame mpo, ewaqabuza engathi *yitshokolethi* ezancibilika emlonyeni wakhe. Kwakuzinsuku umzimba wami usebutshelezi; ungakabi mavinqovinqo engathi yisikhumba se-*orenji*. Kwakuyilezo nsuku lebizu lokuthi *OCD Olivia* lingakabambi. Ngangiseseyintombi etshingayo, ngizizwa kodwa ngizithole sengincibilika ezandleni zesithandwa sami.

Kambe angathini nxa engangibona namhlanje uSimba, sengiguge kangaka?

Isikhathi ... asazi.

“Uzahlala wedwa kuze kube nini?” Ngamazwi kamama la ephunyuka lapho engiwacindezele khona engqondweni yami. Athi angaphunyuka angithi hlasi, angenze isibotshwa.

“Angingedwa. Nanku phela ngihamba umhlaba wonke, ngibone indawo ezikhangayo; ngilabangane labo abahamba umhlaba wonke, futhi ngibala amabhuku avula ingqondo. Ngenza umsebenzi oqakathekileyo – owokucubungula lokuloba izisekelo zengqubekela phambili. Futhi ngiyanxuswa emibuthanweni yezifundiswa ukuthi ngibe yisikhulumi. Ngilendlu ebiza mina, *iMercedes Benz* yami emnyama epake egarajini, njalo sengizaqeda *iPhD* yami.” Yikho engandise ukukutsho kumama. Ngiyazi futhi ukuthi kafuni lakungizwa ngibalisa kanje. Zonke izinto lezi uyazeyisa.

Iqiniso yikuthi ngingedwa zwi, njengalokhu engiyikho khona khathezi endlini yami yokulala. Ngizama khona ukuvika amagama lemibuzo kamama. Lanxa ngisitsho amazwi engijaye ukuwatsho njengehawu nxa umama engibuza ukuthi ngizakuba ngedwa kuze kube nini, amagama ami atshayeka esibukweni aphenyuke azongivathuza ebusweni njengempama etshisayo ebengifuna ukuyinamathisela kuPhilemon.

Ngizwa ubuhlungu.

Kusukela ngensuku zika Simba, umama kayithuli indaba yokufuna abazukulu. Uthi sekuzekumyangisa ukuhlala echasisela izihlobo ukuthi kungani ngilokhe ngingendanga futhi ngingelamntwana sengiguge kangaka.

Ngihlala ngimkhumbuza ukuthi zikhona ezinye izinto eziqakathekileyo empilweni ukwedlula ukwenda lokuzala. Nxa ngisitsho njalo, ubamba esinye sezihlathi zakhe esezibuzana amavuko, awise inkalakatha yephika, esinye isandla sibambe icele elilenhliziyo engathi angalekela izatshaya idubuke inhliziyo.

Kwesinye isikhathi ingitshiya ngimdambiyana lindaba.

Sengiwhambe ngawubhudula umhlaba wonke, ngaze ngayakuthi gulukudu eFrance, lapho engaqansa khona i-Eiffel Tower. Ukuyiqansa lokhu leqembu elalingamukele akufani ngitsho lokuyiqansa lomunye omthandayo eceleni kwakho. Ngangikhanuke khona nje ukuthola amafulawuzi kumbe

ibhokisi lamatshokholethi nge *Valentine's Day*. Kumbe ukuthi ngisehofisini ebusuku abekhona ongifonelayo.

Yebo, umzimba wami usugugile – sekuyisikhathi sakhona. Kungijumile lokhu kuguga ngingazange ngibukholise ubutsha bami. Konke lokhu kungenxa yendoda eyodwa zwi.

Ijuvethi esembhedeni ivuleke kucele engilala kulo kuphela. Emqamelweni kulenkalakatha yebhuku elikhuluma ngendaba zobudlelwano babomama labobaba lengqubekelaphambili. Yilo engilibalayo ngilungiselela ukubhala okuzafundwa ngezinye izifundiswa.

Namhlanje ngizabalela ngibuye ngilalele esandleni sokunene sombheda. Kambe ukhona sibili umuntu engizamthola ongakuzwisisa lokhu kutshintsha kwami amacele ombheda?

“So, kuhambe njani?”

NguMildred lowo oziphe isikhathi sokuzongibona ngemva kwesikhathi selantshi, efuna ukuzwa ukuthi izinto zihambe njani phakathi kwami loPhilemon izolo.

Kuletshatha engilwa lalo esitofini. Lilenkani ngoba sengilwe lalo okwamalanga amabili, ngitsho ukuthi liphume. Selingicaphula. Ngiqhubeke ngizama ukususa lelitshatha ngoba ngingafuni ukuphendula umbuzo kaMildred. Kulomnuko wento ehlobileyo ekhitshini. Uphuma embizeni yerayisi yayizolo esengiyiphosele eplastikini, ngayifaka ebhimu yendlini.

“Uyazi njani, into yamadating agency le ayihambelani lami ngitsho. Singamanzi le-oyili”

Nguye phela uMildred owayeze lecebo lokuthi sisebenzise *idating agency* ethiwa yi *Heart2Heart*. Yayihlala ikhankasa emaphepheni ngokunceda kwayo abantu abadinga uthando labomaqondana. Abantu be *Heart2Heart* babefunga bethi balakho ukutholela iloba ngubani osebeyedwa isikhathi eside, umaqondana wakhe azamkholwa.

Nguye futhi uMildred owayephitsheke ukwedlula mina. Nguye owayabona abantu be-*agency*, wabhadala imali eyayifuneka waze wagcwalisa lamafomu akhona, hatshi mina.

Olivia Gavi. Imnyaka 35. Ubude 1.73m. Ulejwabu elimpofana. Ngumama osebenza umsebenzi ophezulu. Kakaze ende. Kalabantwana. Udinga indoda eleminyaka engu 35 kusiya ku 45. Indoda le kumele ibe lomsebenzi ophezulu, futhi ingathathanga (abehlukana labomkabo okusemthethweni, kunye labalabantwana baqondile labo).

Ayisikho engangikufuna lokhu – ukuchaya impilo yami kudating agency. Kodwa uMildred wayeleqiniso lokuthi yiyo indlela eyayizangisebenzela.

Ngisebenza nzima. Ngiyaphuza ukutshayisa. Omunye umsebenzi ngicina ngihamba lawo endlini. Angilaso isikhathi sokukwejisa ngisiya endaweni zokuzithokozisa ebusuku. Ngithola kungcono ukuba sewofisini, lapho engijaye khona. Ngizizwa ngikhululekile ewofisini yami.

“Uzangibonga mhla umthola umaqondana,” kwakunguMildred lowo, ebobotheka lapho ebhala ukuthi indoda engangiyidinga kwakumele ibe ngenjani.

Umuntu kambe angadinga umuntu azatshada laye esebenzisa *idating agency*? Ngangifisa ukuthi uMildred awubone wonke umbhedo lo. Uphilemon waba ngumzekeliso othe kla wokuhlanya lokhu.

“Wale indoda ngenxa yeqhubu ebingeke ikhethe ukuthi liphume kumbe hayi!”

“Mildred, bekusenyanyisa lokhuya! Khona ukuthi acabange ukuthi ngingamqabuza yikudelela kokucina!”

Awise iphika, anikine ikhanda. Kumqede amandla lokhu kwenza kwami. Noma engatsho lutho, ngiyazi ukuthi ucabangani. Ucabanga ukuthi ngigula okwedlula *iOCD* le atshona eyitsho. Into ehlupha umngane wami yikuthi lami ngizahloba njengembiza yerayisi esengiyiphosele ebhimu, ngiswele yona indoda eyodwa.

Iselifoni yami inyakaze ngoba ngiyivale iphimbo ngisemhlanganweni ngoMvulo ekuseni. Inamba yakhona angiyazi. Kuthi sesiqedile umhlangano ngiyifonele lenamba engingayaziyo.

“*Heart2Heart Matchmaking Consultants*. Ngu Irene okhulumayo, ngingakusiza?”

Inhliziyo yami itshone sengikhumbula okwenzakeleyo loPhilemon. Acele ibizo lami u Irene, ngimuphe ngithandabuza.

“Sike sakuzama Miss Gavi, sifuna ukwazisa ukuthi sesithole abantu ababili abahambelana lokudingayo. Sesikuthumele *i-information* yabo ku imeyili adresi esiyisebenzise ekucineni kwethu ukukuthumela i-imeyili.”

Eningakwaziyo yikuthi ngimbonge kumbe ngimbone njengomathanda indaba. Ngendlela uPhilemon abengumhlola ngayo, bengithi uzabatshela *e-agency* ukuthi bangilahlele khatshana ngenxa yendlela engimyangise ngayo.

Engxenye uzwile ebengikutsho, wabona ukuthi izinto ezincane angazinakiyo ngendlela abukeka ngayo, yizo ezenza ukuthi eleminyaka engamatshumi amane lane azithole eyinsumbelume.

Nanko ke umphika uhleka ibhodo ukuthi imnyama. Ngiyazi yimi lowo. Kodwa i-imeyeli iyangigwegwa. Kuthi ngiyivule ngibale ngamadoda amabili la okukhulunywa ngawo. Kuthiwa bahambelana lami kanye.

Ngimbonge kuhle usisi osefonini. Uzwakala eyintombazana encane, yikho nje lelizwi lakhe lingathi ngelomuntu oqunjwaqunjwayo. Ngingene ku-imeyili. Liqiniso sibili – nansi evela kumaqhuzu we*Heart2Heart*, u Bertha-Lee Hove. Ekucineni, ngaphansi kwebizo lakhe, kubhalwe ngamabala abomvu gebhu athi wona, “Uthando lukuthola lanxa usudelile. Khanyisa isibane sakho, luze kuwe.”

Kambe ngingaba ngomunye wasebedelile? Kusamele ngibe ngomunye wabo nxa sengisebenzisa isikhathi somsebenzi ukudinga amadoda kulap *top*. Athini uTari, umsizi wami nxa engikhanda ngisenzenje? Ngizwa engathi ngibukele amapikitsha abantu abanqunu ngesikhathi somsebenzi.

Ngivule i-*attachment* ye-imeyili. Kulamapikitsha amadoda amabili. Batshiyene kakhulu. Owokuqala kuthiwa nguShadreck. Uthi uleminyaka engu 44, wehlukana lomkakhe, ulabantwana ababili, uligqwetha elimele enye inkampani njalo ufuna ukuthatha okwesibili. Ubomvu, ulendevu ezingamaqwayibana futhi ulemwabanga.

Ngithi jeqe ngasemnyango osesandleni sami sokudla. Noma uvaliwe ngikhangele emnkenkeni omncane otshiywe yisivalo phansi, ukuthi akulanyawo ezizayo ehofisini yami. Ngibone ukukhanya kuphela, besengiqhubeka ngikhangelela indoda yesibili. Ibizo lakhe ngu Melvin.

Uleminyaka engu 38, kakaze athathe, kalamntwana njalo ulebhizinisi yakhe. Njengo Shadreck, ufuna umuntu wokuthatha. Uvalo lungithi tha nxa ngibona ukubobotheka kwakhe. Umnyama kakhulu kulo Shadreck njalo indebe zakhe ziqatha, zibanzi. Amehlo akhe a... amehlo akhe... anjengaka Simba xathu. Izifoto ezisezihlathini nxa ebobotheke kanje, lazo ngezikaSimba kanye! Inwele zami zisukume.

Hawu bantu, kwenzakalani? Kungabe...

Ngingakacabangi ukwedlula lapho ikhale ifoni. Iyaklabalala okomntwana odinga ukuthuliswa. Ngivale ilap *top* ngokutshetsha.

“Umhlangano wakho ka 11 o’ clock usenzaqalisa,” ngu Tari lowo ecingweni.

“Ngiyabonga Tari,” yimi lowo kodwa inqgondo ingekho ngitsho entweni ayitshoyo. Ngilokhe ngimangele, ngizibuza ngalokhu engisanda kukubona.

Ekucineni kwaba nguMildred lomkakhe abangincengayo ukuthi ngiyebona indoda yesibili ngemva kuka Philemon. Ngezwa ngiyangeka ukuthi indaba isize yangenelwa nguTatenda, umkaMildred. Kajayelanga uTatenda ukuthenga izindaba zabomama. Ngahle ngabona ukuthi uMildred nguye omfuqileyo ukuthi akhulume lami.

“Ngokuya kwesikhathi, amadoda ayavuthwa abe ngabantu abazwayo. Ungesabi ngoba sithi ngokukhula, lokucabanga kujule,” watsho uTatenda kodwa kukhanya ukuthi kakhululekanga; ubengafuni ukuba ngumthunyuwa endabeni enje.

Kwakusithi ngibaphe umzekeliso kaPhilemon ngabuye ngazikhuza ngoba uMildred wayezaqala futhi indaba ye*OCD*.

Ngangiyizwa into eyayitshiwo nguTatenda. Into engangingavumelani layo yindlela okwakusenziwa ngayo izinto. Kambe ngasengisele esikhaleni okokuthi kwasekumele ngikhethe amadoda athunyezwa nge-imeyili? Ngikhethe indoda engingayaziyo ukuthi iqinisile na nxa isithi ifuna ukuthatha?

“Bangane, mina ngigculisekile ngempilo yami. Akukho engikudingayo. Lingazikhathazi kakhulu ngami. Yonk’ into ilisikhathi sayo.”

Wagunqula amehlo uMildred wakhangelisa isandla sami esasilokhe sivala sivula iwatshi engangiyigqokile. Wayethi ngezinye zezinto engangingekeli ukuzenza nxa sengicaphuka.

“Ungaboba yisiphukuphuku. Awukhuli ubuyela emuva. Ungaqhubeka usebenza kanzima kangaka uzalaluka amaqanda akho esetshwabhene isikhathi singakafiki!”

Ngangingelaqiniso ukuthi abantwana ngiyabafuna, kodwa wonke umuntu wayethi yiwo umuthi engangi-wufuna ukuthi impilo yami ilunge. UTari laye, owayengumama, wayethi aluba ngangilabantwana, ngangingasozwe ngiphilele umsebenzi. Ukubhejela umsebenzi kwakuzathotshwa ngokunye okuqakathekileyo, ngu Tari lowo esengeza.

Kambe uTari ngale nkulumo yakhe, utsho ukuthi yena kasebenzi gadalala lapha emsebenzini? Ngazibuza ngamandla sengimkhande kanengineni ezidlalela kuFacebook ngesikhathi somsebenzi. Wayengakuzwisisi na ukuthi ukutshutshisa inkululeko yabomama kwakuyinto eqakathekileyo? Wayengakuzwisisi yini ukuthi sasikhanda imithetho eyayenza impilo zabomama zibe lesisindo? Kambe wayengakuboni ukuthi nxa inkululeko yabomama izenzakala, abanye bethu kwakumele sisebenze gadalala?

Engangikwazi yikuthi abanengi engangisebenza labo babethi ngiyinkinga. Ngingalwela njani amalungelo abomama abatshadileyo ukuthi impahla esemendweni wabo ibize bona; ngiwalwele ngaliphi amalungelo abomama ababelethayo; ngibalwele kanjani abafelokazi ukuthi bangabanjwa ngamandla ukungenwa – konke lokhu ngangizakulwela njani ngingakaze ngidlule kikho empilweni yami? Nanku phela nganginakaze ngende,

ngingakaze ngizale, ngitsho phela lokufelwa yindoda. Babengibona njengomfazanyana okhuluma ngezinto azibala emabhukwini kuphela.

Aluba umama ngake ngamtshela ngabantu engangisebenza labo, wayezakuthi, “Angithi ngihlala ngikutshela? Nanko-ke labanye bayakubona ukuthi unjani.”

Kodwa ngangibazwisisa engisebenza labo. Ngikuzwisisa futhi ukuthi babefuna ukutshwabhanisa impilo yami, ibe yilokho abakubona kumele kube yimpilo yomuntu wesifazane. Angithi babethi ngamasiko? Babethi isiko yikuthi wonke umfazi ende, azale, kungakhathalekile ukuthi uyakufuna yini lokhu kokubili kumbe hatshi. Kube yisimanga kimi-ke ukuthi imicabango enjengale, yiyo esasisilwa layo emsebenzini nsuku zonke, kodwa nanku engisebenza labo bengalitshutshisi lelivangeli kwezabo impilo.

Kambe umngane wami uMildred laye wayengizwisisa ngendlela engangicabaga ukuthi ungizwisisa ngayo?

Yena loTatenda batshada sisanda kuqeda eyunivesithi. Wahle waba ngokhonza umendo uMildred; ehlabela okuhle ngawo njalo nje loba kwakukhanya ukuthi eyakhe impilo yama mpo.

Ukuzala lokukhulisa abantwana abane kwakusitsho ukuthi wayekhuthe amathuba amanengi okuthi afunde, athole amathuba esikhundla esithe xaxa emsebenzini wakhe. Yiwo lawo mathuba engawabamba ngezandla zonke ngakhuphuka empilweni. Ngileminyaka engu 35, ngilezinto ezibiza mina, njalo ngilesiphala solwazi esijulileyo. UMildred yena wayelokhe esesikhundleni esiphansi emsebenzini wakhe lapho ayesesebenze khona phose iminyaka elitshumi. Ukuzala kwakhe isithumethume yikho okwamenza wangakhanyi eqakathekile emsebenzini. Phela banjalo abaqhatshi.

Into engangingayifuni yikuba njengoMildred. Kwakumnandi kimi ukuthi ngasengiyicezile lindlela. Kwakusiba lezikhathi engangizibuza khona ukuthi aluba uSimba wahlala lami ngangizaphila impilo enjani. Ukuthi uthando lwaluzangithoba izifiso zami ziphelele ekuzaleni lokweluka amabhuthizi? Ngangingenza njengo Mildred – ngithathe amaphupho ami ngiwatshwathike khatshana, ngiphilele imuli yami?

Kodwa kwakusizani ukucabanga ngento engazange yenzakale? UTatenda loMildred babengivulele amehlo lendlebe belindele impendulo yami.

“Ok. Ngizakuyahlangana lomunye umuntu futhi, ukuze ngigcine amaqanda ami.”

Ngangizimisele ukuyambona uMelvin ngoba ngifuna ukubona ukuthi uhambelana loSimba sibili; ukuthi abafuleyo bangavuka babengabaphilayo.

“Nxa ugqoke ijini le, umama sibili, uyabulala.”

“Simba akuyekel’ into yakho leyo.”

Ngizamkhuza okokucina ngoba uyangiphazamisa ekubukeleni ifilimu edlala namhlanje.

Ifilimu yakhona ithiwa *Neria*. Imayelana lomfelokazi owathi ngokubhubha komkahe wabe esezithelile. Izihlobo zazibangisana impahla yomufi ngapha besithi kumele uNeria angenwe ngumnewabo womufi, abe ngumfazi wesibili.

Sileminyaka engu 19 yobudala – mina lo Simba, kodwa indaba kaNeria ihlabe yephukela kimi. Ngihle ngizitshele ukuthi impilo yami yonke ngizasebenza ukulwela abafazi abanjengoNeria.

Aqhubeke ehlafula amaputi uSimba. Wenza ngabomo ukuthi ukuhlafula kwakhe kube lomsindo. Selibonile ijaha ukuthi asisoze sibhilikicane lapha, ngendlela esijayeke ukuyenza nxa sibukele amanye amafilimu.

“Ungenzani nxa sitshadile bese....”

“Sitshada?” Ngimqage engakayi khatshana. Ahleke kancane umtshayeli we thekisi esiyithethe sesibuyela eyunivesithi.

“Akume ngiqede. Asithi sitshadile, besengisifa njengendoda kamama lowana kufilimu, ungenda futhi? Ungavuma ukungenwa ngumfowethu?”

“Okokuqala, akuqinisekanga ukuthi sizatshada. Okwesibili, singatshada ngingacina sengizibulele. Okokucina, ngezake ngisetshenziswe njengento nje. Yikho-ke, *no*, ngezake ngivume ukungenwa ngumfowenu.”

“Ndoda, iluhlaza intombi yakho,” ngumtshayeli wethekisi lowo esethenga indaba yethu enganxuswanga.

“Ngiyazi mdala. Ungathi lijongosi. Kodwa uzacina engumkami kuphela.”

Ngizwe ngifikelwa yikwesaba okuncane nxa esitsho njalo uSimba. Uzimisele sibili ukuthi sitshade sibe ngosofasilahlane. Ufuna ngibe ngumkakhe sibili.

“Sizabona,” yimi lowo ngoba ngiyibona lento yokuthathana isesekhatshana.

Abobothেকে uSimba athi, “Uyakwazi ukuthi liqiniso. Wena uzahlala ungowami.” Amehlo akhe abika ukuyikholwa lento; kathandabuzi ngitsho lakancane.

Kwasekuzinyanga ezithize ngacina ukuba lawo lomcabango. Khathesi ngasengicabanga isithembiso engasipha uSimba kudala.

Mina laye sasizaqalela uTatenda loMildred ukutshada, ngabe uSimba kabhubhanga ngingalindele. Wayeleminyaka engu 24 uSimba, eqinile,

ephilile. Kodwa inhliziyi yakhe yama ukutshaya elele, wavuka ethule umntanabantu.

Kambe amaphupho angaka ayengatshabalala ngaloluhlobo? Kwangichoba amathambo. Ngaba ngolahlekileyo, ngatshona eliweni elimnyama khaca. Ngafisa ukuthi lami ngiye kogoqwanyawo, ngilandele usomoya wami. Kusukela ngaleso sikhathi, uthando kwaba yinto engiyesabayo; into engatshiya inhliziyi yami isopha kokuphela. Ngakubona ukuthi umuntu omthandayo angakutshiya nje egcekeni, engavalelisanga.

Ngithe ngingcwaba uSimba, ngangcwaba lephupho lami lokutshada, lokuthanda omunye umuntu ngenhliziyi yami yonke. Endaweni yothando ngagqiba umsebenzi, ngaphilela wona. Kuthe abantu abaseduze kwami betshada, bezala, mina ngacwila kwezamalungelo lenkululeko yabomama; ngakhetha ukuba yilizwi labo. Ngazitshela ukuthi ubuhlungu obabuziwa ngumfazi wonke, lami ngangibuzwa.

Umama, uMildred loTatenda babengabazi ubuhlungu bami bokulahlekelwa nguSimba. Kambe babebona engathi impilo ingakubazela omunye usomoya, kube lesipeya njengesikopela esithungelwa emphethweni wejazi waphakathi, ukuthi kungalahleka esinye sezikopela, ukhuphe esisemphethweni ufake sona?

Angingedwa. Ngihamba umhlaba wonke ngibona indawo ezikhangayo, ngilabangane abahamba umhlaba wonke futhi ngifunda amabhuku alenkanyiso.

Ngangiyiphinda lengoma ngendlela enza abantu labo bacine bengaboni isikhala esisenhliziyweni yami.

“Owakhathesi uzaba ngcono. Ngikuzwa lasemathanjeni ami.”

Izwi likaMildred limpompoloze nje ekhanda lami. Ngiyazi ungifisela okuhle. Kodwa ngifuna ukumtshela ngesimanga sika Melvin. Mhlawumbe kumele ngimtshengise ipikitsha kaMelvin besengimbuza ukuthi ngiyaphupha yini nxa ngisithi ufana loSimba xathu.

Emva kwalokho besengimtshela ngesithembiso engasipha uSimba eminyakeni elitshumi lanhlanu eyadlulayo, ukuthi angisoze ngivume ukungenwa ngumfowabo, njengo Neria.

Ngiyazi sibili uMelvin loSimba kabazalani, yikho engizakutshela uMildred. Ngiyazi futhi ukuthi impilo yami kumele iqhubekela phambili. Kodwa... uSimba lokhe ngimthanda, ngenhliziyi yami yonke. Ukuthi ngithandane lomuntu ofana laye kanje – ngingahle ngikwenelise?

Ngikwazi mhlophe ukuthi uMildred uzayiqala indaba yeOCD, mhlawumbe engeze athi ngidinga usizo lokuthi ngimkhalele uSimba kwedlule.

“Akuqondanga ukuthi ube ulokhe usizwa kanje ngemva kweminyaka yonke le. Qhubekela phambili ngempilo yakho, ngoba akukho okuzamvusa uSimba kwabafuleyo.”

Ilizwi leli liqala lingelika Mildred, litshinthe libe ngelika mama ekucineni.

“Kodwa angingedwa! Ngihamba umhlaba wonke ngibona indawo ezikhangayo abangane bami....”

Angisakhumbuli ukuthi ingoma yami le icina njani. Angisafuni kuyikhumbula. Ayisaqakathekanga ngoba ngiyazi ukuthi enhliziyweni yami, angisoze ngaba ngedwa.

Bayeza

Christopher Mlalazi

ULungisani ujamile egedini langakibo. Uyazelula. Avule umlomo azamule kancane. Amehlo akhe ehle ngo Khumbulani Street. Okuyisifudlana kwesititshi kugeleza kancane ngakuleliya cele lomgwaqo. Noma nje umnuko waso ubambile ekuseni lokhu, usewejayela uLungisani, yikho nje engelandaba ukuthi sesilesikhathi esedlula inyanga eyodwa situtuma lesi sititshi, amanzi aso ezigelezela santando yonke indawo.

Kuselokitshini lapha. Ngapha langapha komgwaqo izindlu ludwendwe. Labomama bakhothe bathanyela amayadi abo, belungiselela ilanga elitsha. Kwenye yezindlu kuzwakala irediyo. Ivulwe yalawulelwa baba, kutshaywa imbaqanga. Irediyo incintisana lamazwi abantwana. Ngomsindo wabo, uLungisani uyazi ukuthi badlala umatshayana. Umsindo nki!

Ujamile nje egedini uLungisani, kagqokanga yembe. Noma elenyembezi zokuzamula, uyabona ukuthi kukhona ingxoxo ephethwe ngomama abathanyelayo. Kezwa ukuthi bathini, akubonayo kuphela yikukhomba lokuyabuzela kwemithanyelo. Solubambe nki uthuli phezu kwabo, sokungani yilamayezi adwetshwe emdulini weklasi yakhe esikolo, amayezi aqukethe okutshiwo ngumuntu.

Oyedwa, ababili, abathathu, abane, abahlanu... ababale ngamehlo uLungisani omama laba. Khonokho afikelwe ngumutsho ekhanda, “omama abahlanu bayathanyela, futhi bayanyeya.” Umama oyedwa oyisidudla labomama abacakileyo abane, bathanyela amayadi abo amahlanu ekwindla. Umama oyisidudla ame ukuthanyela, aqonde mpo, akhangele ngakuLungisani.

Loba ebucwadelana usidudla, uyabona uLungisani ukuthi umama lo ukhamise okomuntu ongelankani lakubonayo; okomuntu ophelileweyo. Akhangele umakhelwane wakhe usidudla. Umakhelwane ame ukuthanyela laye athi mpo, bobabili bakhangele ngakuLungisani. Ngamunye ngamunye ngakumacele omabili omgwaqo, omama bame baqonde, bakhangele ngakuLungisani.

ULungisani abathi nzo omama laba. Ngendlela abakhamise ngayo, ungathi zinyanga lamathwasa kuhlatshelwa. Nxa ubakhangele ungathi bazakuthi tshompo bagiye, imithanyelo idlalele emoyeni njengamatshoba exotsha imimoya emibi.

ULungisani azwe kusithi akhwaze athi kubo, “Akula lutho olubi ngemuli yangakithi. Lingabongikhangelana njalo lina!”

Khonokho nje aklabalalale omunye umuntu ngemva kwakhe: “Bayeza!” Ungathi ukhanyiwe lomuntu.

Athi tshibiliki uLungisani. Kulendoda eza ithelile ngesiqubu emgwaqweni. Kuthi dlwe kuLungisani ukuthi omama laba bebengakhangelanga yena isikhathi sonke lesi – bebona okungale kwakhe. Indoda le igqoke iyembe emhlophe esiyimitshwezutshwezu ngokudabuka. Sekungathi iyembe ibengiwe. Nxa egijima kanje imichilo yeyembe isiphapha emoyeni njengeyembe yesithombe esafakwa ngunina ukwethusa inyoni emasimini abo angemuva kwelokitshi. Ingani nguMnumzana Nkani bantu, umbalisi wakhe ka Gredi 7A? Yena owokuvuthuza uPersuade, umnewabo kaLungisani, mhla ethola umfana elebhokisi legwayi lemhlanga esikhwameni sakhe sesikolo. Sekulesikhathi wacina ukumbona umnewabo uLungisani. Uselenyanga ezithize engekho ngekhaya uPersuade.

Umfanekiso ka Mnumzana Nkani usemabhakaneni agcwele yonke indawo. Amabhakane akhona uwathola ebothshelwe emaphowulwini amagetsi lawamafoni, enamathiselwe lemdulini wemagrosa lapho okusebenzela khona uyise kaLungisani. Abantu bathi ngowebandla eliphikisa elibusayo njalo bazamvotela kuviki ezayo ngesikhathi sokhetho.

“Catshani, bantu!” NguNkani lowo ememeza edlula ethelile. “Bayeza!” Ngakwelinye icele lobuso bakhe, ugeleza igazi. Imichilochilo yeyembe yakhe layo ilegazi.

“Lungisani!” ngunina lowo ekhwaza ngewindini lekhitshini elivuliweyo. “Wena! Ngena endlini khathesi - so.”

UTatenda umi eceleni kukaMaNdlovu, amehlo akhe evulekile angani ngama ringi donathi.

Sekuthule zwi, emgwaqweni. Ngitsho loyedwa umuntu lapho. Kodwa imbaqanga lokhe iqaqamba lokungokhekhe lokhe kuklabalala kudlala umatshayana.

“Endlini kuyatshisa; umama laye!” nguLungisani lowo ephendula eqholoza, ezikhwezela ibhulugwe lakhe eliwayo.

“Lungisani,” akhwaze uMaNdlovu. “Lumntwana lo!” Usekhuluma yedwa uMaNdlovu. Khonokho nje, anyamalale ewindini.

Dukuduku, uLungisani ababone betheleka samfula ogcweleyo ngasekhoneni okuqonde khona uMnumzana Nkani. Abagijimi benza kodwa.

Bathelile ukwedlula uNkani ngesikhathi esedlula lapha. Ngontanga bonke, bahlome baphelela ngamatshe lezigodo, njalo batshaya amakhwelo.

Ngaleso sikhathi thutshu uMaNdlovu ngemuva kukaLungisani. Ngezandla zombili amuthi hlasi, engathi uqukula okungumgodlana okululanyana, agijime angene laye endlini.

Bonke sebemi ewindini lekhitshini bekhangele ngasegedini. Ubuso bomuntu munye ngamunye bubika okutshiyeneyo. UMaNdlovu wethukile ngoba esazi mhlophe ukuthi ama *Green Bomber* asiwokudlala ngawo. ULungisani uzondile ngoba ufisa ukuthi ngabe uphandle. OkuTatenda khona amehlo asemakhulu ngamandla ngoba kukholisa ukubona yonke linyakanyaka. Umncane kuloLungisani ngeminyaka emithathu uTatenda njalo ngumntaka makhelwane wabo.

AmaGreen Bomber athe esithi tshazi esedlula, uLungisani wahle wazi ukuthi kukhona abamxotshanisayo, abafuna ukumbamba xhaka. Kuviki eliphelileyo, yena loTatenda babukela *amaGreen Bomber* exotshanima omunye ubaba lomama, bebaxotshanisela ukuthi baqgoke izikipa zeqembu eliphikisayo. Enelisa ama *Green Bomber* ukubabamba laba bobabili, ababhula baze bathi yatha okwabantu abafileyo.

Ngemva kwesikhathana, uLungisani aphunyuke endlini ayequtha egedini. *AmaGreen Bomber* asenyamalele njengo Mnumzana Nkani. Sekusele uthuli kuphela lapho abadlule begijima khona. Asukume uLungisani ebona abantu bephuma ezindlini zabo bekhangele lapho okutshone khona abakade bexotshana. Ngitsho loyedwa okhulumayo. Imbaqanga ungayizwa? Lokungabantwana obekudlala umatshayana ungakuzwa? Ungathi kokubili kuginywe yisiphithiphithi sokuxotshana.

Khonokho abantu besalibele kuzwakale umkhosi ekucineni komgwaqo. Abalezindlu eduze lomkhosi bantshobeke phakathi ngesikhulu isiqubu. Izivalo bha bha bha engathi yimibhobho.

Atheleke *amaGreen Bomber* ekhoneni, egijima eqonde ngakuLungisani. Yiwo khathesi asebaleka. Athi esathathekile ngokubona lokhu, azithole esephakanyiswe ngunina futhi uLungisani, amuthi qithi ekhitshini.

“Ulenkani wena! Isangqondo somntwana lesi!” atsho ngelizwi eliphezulu, elozondileyo uMaNdlovu. Amhlabe ngempama umfana engathi umkhupha leyo nkani, atshayebele isivalo akhiye. Ahaluzele esiya ewindini uMaNdlovu ukuthi angakhuthwa ngokuphandle, uLungisani loTatenda sece eceleni kwakhe. *AmaGreen Bomber* adlule eyimitshoko ebuyela lapho avelele khona. Kuthule kancane, andubana kudlule elinye iqembu labantu lisezithende zama *Green Bomber*.

Leliqembu lalo liyamemeza, litshaya amakhwelo, liphosa amatshe – khonokho obekusenziwa ngama Green Bomber exotshanisa uMnumzana Nkani. Ixuku leli lilabobaba labomama, labantwana, kuzothi emva kwabo kulomgaxa walapha elokitshini, uGinger. Ezikhathini ezinengi uGinger kakhonkothi, kenzini. Kodwa khathesi, uyakhonkotha, uncedisa abaxotshanisa ama*Green Bomber*.

UMnumzana Nkani nguye osephambili. Ulokhe egqoke iyembe yakhe leya emadabudabu, ineophuzela injalo. Kasawafuthi nje amatshe, ungathi lisotsha liphosa omaquphula.

Engacabanganga lokuthi wenzani, akhiyunule umnyango uLungisani, nango egijima esiya egedini. Kasi muntu odlula lapho! Ungathi ilokitshi lonke lilapha ekuxotshaniseni ama*Green Bomber*. Nango ethatheka laye uLungisani ebaxhuma emsileni. Athathele aze abedlule abanengi. Aphaphame esephambili! Khonokho bathi khwimilili bonke abantu! Bawuhlabe bawulawule umkhosi sebetshibilika bebaleka beqonde lapho abavela khona. Azithole esekhangелane lawo ama*Green Bomber* uLungisani. Yiwo manje asehlasela!

Amaqembu womabili agqolozelane, phakathi kwawo kulokuyisifudlana kwamanzi esititshi okuquma phakathi komgwaqo. Kuthule cwaka okwezulu elithweleyo.

ULungisani akhangele omunye wama*Green Bomber*. Uzacile lumfana, ugqoke isikipa esiluhlaza njengabanye bakhe, lekhowa lengwane elilombala ofanayo. Ibheqe lengwane elichayileyo liwe lavalala ubuso bakhe. Um*Green Bomber* useze watshekisa ikhanda ukuze ambone kuhle uLungisani. Bakhangelane.

ULungisani uthwele ingxenye yesitina.

“Lungisani,” ngunina lowo ememeza, esethelekile ngemva kwakhe.

Ethuke, athalaze uLungisani.

Ukuthula obekukhona amaqembu ethobelene, kwedlule ngasikhatshana. Asekhwaza ama*Green Bomber* manje. Amatshe sekuyisiqhotho baba! Elinye ilitshela limkhuthe ikhanda uLungisani. Athi kunjekunje asijike isitina sakhe, asithi hlasi unina. Usezonde usesidlainja uMaNdlovu ngiyakutshela. Amdutshuze, amphasule ezibunu uLungisani, ngapha emhudula beqonde endlini. Amatshe asesina eceleni kwabo.

Befika nje endlini, adlulele ewindini uLungisani, lapho asebukele khona okwenzakala phandle. Akade bephosa amatshe sebenyamalele.

Litheleke ibhayisikili eyadini ngenkalakatha yesiqubu. Kuwe bhayisikili konke lomaligada. Uthuli nki. Umaligada ugqoke ihovorosi emnyama. Atshompoke evuka phansi. Ngasikhatshana babone, ha... nguyise

kaLungisani, usemi ewindini labo, lapho abalunguze khona. Usehlola indololwane zakhe ezihluzukileyo, ngeminwe egcwele iglu yezicathulo.

“Awulimalanga , baba?” abuze uMaNdlovu esesaba ukuthi funa umkakhe ulimele kakhulu.

“Hatshi kakhulu,” ngusekaLungisani lowo engathi uyahwabha. “Ngihluzuke indololwane ekuweni ngebhayisikili.”

“Bengithi mhlawumbe ulimele kakhulu,” nguMaNdlovu lowo. Uyakhafuzela. Amaphaphu asebhulana ngaphansi kwesigqoko sokulala alokhu esigqokile emini lokhu. Sidala isigqoko sakhona.

“Okwenzakale *ebottle store* namhlanje, akukhulumeki. Kunzima,” nguNgwenya lowo ephelilewe, ngapha ethintitha uthuli kuhovorosi yakhe. Yindoda elethambo elikhulu. Ukulenga kwezihlathi zakhe kubika ububi bomumo wezinto kulezinsuku.

“Kambe sibili uHulumende lo ufuna senzeni?” abuze uMaNdlovu. “Kwenzakalani sibili phandle lapha?” Utsho ekhomba emgwaqweni.

“Asikaboni lutho, ngiyakutshela,” atsho uNgwenya okomuntu osekubonile ukuthi kwelizayo akuthambanga.

Anikine ikhanda uMaNdlovu. “Kwenzakalani *ebottle store*?”

“Bengiye khona ngidinga omunye undoda othengisa izithende ezitshipileyo ngoba angizitholanga efekithari namhla ekuseni,” aqale njalo indaba yakhe uNgwenya. OkungoLungisani loTatenda sekuqaphise indlebe, kuyithenga. “UNkani thutshu, ama*Green Bomber* emhle?” ibhobho. Iyembe isinephuzela, esegcwele igazi indawo yonke.”

“Simbonile lathi,” kutsho uMaNdlovu. “Badlule khonapha phambi kwegedi lethu.”

“Kunini simtshela undoda lo ukuthi atshiyane lento zakhe azenzayo?” kuqhubeka uNgwenya. “Ngifung’ ijoyi sibili, uzasilethel’ inkalakatha yodubo elokitshini lapha. Ath’ ubuqholo! Khangela ukuthi sokusenzakalani manje?”

Atshaye izandla uMaNdlovu okomuntu ophelelweyo, angatsho lutho.

“UNkani ungene *ebottle store* ngesivuvu, waphuma eselabangane bakhe. Bawaxotshanisa ama*Green Bomber*. Bancediswe langezinye izakhamizi.”

“Sibabonile bedlula khonapha,” kutsho sekumemeza okuTatenda. “UGinger laye ubebagijimisa, futhi ekhonkotha esithi huwu-huwu gemva kwabo,” sekulingisainja okunkalakatha. Sekugungubele kwabamba amadolo. “Kodwa kalumi muntu uGinger, ligwala lenja.”

“Atshibilika ama*Green Bomber* ukuthi alwe labantu,” aqhubeke uNgwenya. Abeke isandla sakhe ekhanda lika Tatenda. Phela kakho oseke wahlala.

“Baphendukele khonapha phambi kwegedi langakithi,” nguMaNdlovu lowo esethukile. “Ngwenya, kumele uzame icebo ngomtanakho uLungisani. Inkani esekhanda lakhe! Kuthe kujikijelwana ngamatshe indawo yonke le, walela egedini. Ubezalimala kakubi. Ngenze okokumhudula ukuthi angene endlini. Yisiqholo sokucina. Akumbone!” Amuthi nhlo umtanakhe uMaNdlovu.

“ULungisani...” ngokuTatenda lokho sokufile ngohleko kodwa kuluvalele ngemva kwesandla.

“Wena Lungisani, ubolalela unyoko.” Anxaphe uNgwenya, ngapha esekela ikhanda lika Tatenda. “Ufuna ukubona ukuthi nginjani nxa sengizondile?” Usephuphuma ngokuzonda uNgwenya. “Awukwazi ukuthi ama*Green Bomber* anjani? Ayingozi! Ufuna ukusibonisani kanti?”

ULungisani zwi. Ukhangele amazwane akhe engathi uyaqabuka ukuwabona.

Atshibilike uNgwenya akhulume ngelipholileyo eqondise kuMaNdlovu, “Kodwa abantu balile ukuxotshaniswa kokuphela. Batshibilikile bawaxotshanisa ama*Green Bomber*. Abaleke abuyela enkambeni yawo.”

“Abadlulanga lapha okwesibili.”

“Babhode ngale,” atsho uNgwenya ekhombela umyango wangemuva. “Bangene elayinini yesibili usuka kule eyangakithi.”

“Kutsh’ ukuthi behluliwe. Balayekile,” kutsho uMNdllovu ethakazelela lempumela.

“Okwesikhatshana angabe ehluliwe. Awuwazi wena nakaLungisani ama*Green Bomber*. Aletshiki! Uzathi adla impolompolo ezimnyama ngiyakutshela.”

“Mayebabo! Nkosi yami! Okutsho ukuthi bazaphenduka lamhla ebusuku! Ukhetho lolu lwasenza. Yikho ngiluzonda mina. Kwakungenje sithola uzibuse!”

“Angithi ngalesiya sikhathi sasilesitha sinye – umbuso wabelungu. Khatshesi uhulumende wethu nguyeyesilwa labantu. Kutshintshe umbala wesitha kuphela.”

“Bathini-ke manje abantwabethu?”

“Lokho ungabuza uMongameli welizwe! Like lamuthi tshazi uPersuade?”

“Ngitsho.”

“Ngimbonile mina,” nguLungisani lowo ekhangele uyise.

“Nini – ngaphi?” aze aphose agagase uNgwenya. Abazali bobabili bamkhangele sebelethemba.

“Namuhla.”

“Ngaphi – phendula umbuzo wami mani!” nguNgwenya esebhavuma.

“Hayi, baba, ungamhwabhel’ umntwana. Mana akhulume,” atsho ngelipholileyo uMaNdlovu. Akhangele indodana yakhe emehlweni anduba aqhubekele phambili. “Umbone ngaphi umnewenu, Lungisani?”

“Ubelama*Green Bomber*. Ubegqoke ingwane, futhi ethwele iflegi”.

Kuthi zwi endlini.

“Bekungayisuye Lungisani. Ubone omunye umuntu ofana laye. Ngiwabonile mina ama*Green Bomber*,” atsho kwelikade uMaNdlovu, ekhuluma ngelipholileyo njalo.

“Ngimbonile,” atsho ngelilenkani uLungisani.

“Wena, ungabophendulana lonyoko,” akhwaze uNgwenya. “Ngizakubhula ungaqamb’ amanga.”

“Kahle sekabantwana,” atsho encenga langamehlo uMaNdlovu.

Besalibele, athi phulukundlu uLungisani. Athi vuliyani umnyango atshiye ewutshayelege.

UMnumzana Magodi

Diana Charsley

“Wahamba sibili uMinista wethu wemigwaqo,” ngu Nkosikazi Moyo lowo. Ngamuthi jeqe ngecele, ngabobotheka ngingabotheki, ngathula ngaphosela igade engcwabeni. Igade latshaya umduli wegodi lafela phezu kwebhokisi lomufi. Wangunguna uMrs Moyo ngoba ngingamphendulanga wahle wasuka waya ebanganini bakhe ababekhulumela phenzulu, bebanga umsindo. Esuka mina ngathi ukusondela emuva kancane, ngabona ukucazimula kwebhokisi sekuvalwa luthuli lwenhlabathi lamagade obekuphoselwa ngabantu. Basuka bahamba kwasala kuthule emangcwabeni. Amabhasi axhumana esiya emgwaqweni, njengezinhlela esezikhithike impiko. Ngathi nxa ngibukele abasele begqibela, ngacabanga ukuthi umsebenzi ofana lalo, yiwo kanye uJeremiah ayeseziphe wona esezakufa. Jeremiah Sithole: umphorofithi obezimesele ukulungisa okudinga ukulungiswa; kazange aphumelele; ubeyinhlekisa kungxoxo zemabhawa; ubengumngane wami, umakhelwane njalo sizwanana okokuthi ubesazi okusesifubeni sami.

Angizange ngifune ukuyabuthana labanye lapho esasizabuthanela khona ngemva komngcwabo. Phela izidakwa zazizawumana santando, zizama ukucazulula indlela uJeremiah ayefe eseziphatha ngayo. Kwala njalo ukuthi ngiye endlini yakhe ngoba ngingafuni ukusebenzisa umgwaqo owawudlula duze lendlu yakhe. Lowo mgwaqo ngangingafuni ngitsho lokuwubona. Yimi lowa ngizihudula ngiqonda kokuyisikorokoro kwami. Ngathwala nzima ukukukhiyunula. Ngathi ngingena ngavala umnyango ngahlala phansi. Iwindi ngalivuliswa yikuthi kwasekutshisa bhe lapha emoteni. Ngayidumisa ngaphuma emangcwabeni ngaqonda edolobheni. Ngayinyonyobisa imota, ngidinga iloba yini engaphungula ukudana engangikuzwa. Kanti ngilomnyama. Eceleni komgwaqo kwakumi lundoda owayejayele ukuzulazula emigwaqweni, egqoke impahla ezasezilengcino yengcekeza futhi embese ubuso ngesiqephu sesaka esasibhotshozwe emehlweni lemlonyeni. Ngalelo langa isifuba sakhe sasisegcekeni, egqoke ijazi elide elaliphethulwa ngumoya. Esandleni wayephethe igabha lependa elidala ayebasele kulo okungumlidlwanyana, ubone ngokuthunqa kwentuthu.

Wayengathi yilaba baphorofithi abakholwa ukuthi umhlaba usuzaphela, akusensuku zatshwala. Wangivulela amehlo kwangathi ungikhangele wabona konke okuphakathi kwami waze wabona lokungale kwakhona.

Ngithe ngidlula eSports Club, lapho okwakubuthene khona abavela emngcwabeni, ngakhangele ngakhona okomuntu ongefuni kubona ulutho lapho. Ngabona nanguya uCaroline, umtaka Jeremiah, uthwaliswe nzima ngusomangase onguNkosikazi Moyo. Ilema lomfazi leliyana! Ngayitshibilikisa imota, ngayipaka phakathi kwama SUV amabili, ngayalamulela uCaroline.

“Caroline mtanami, ungaphi umnwewenu? Asimdinge,” ngatsho amagama okuqala afika engqondweni ayezakwenza ngimsuse kuNkosikazi Moyo. Wangikhangele ngelengulube unkosikazi.

“Uphakathi,” waphendula uCaroline. Khonokho nje wagwegwa ingalo yami ngeyakhe kwaba yikuphunyuka kwakhe. Yithi labaya sifuqana labantu ababexokozelela ukuthola ukudla sisiya ebha. Saphendla amakhetheni emizi yebhambu ayesemadala samthola ehlezi yedwa lapho uThemba, emnyameni, edwebadweba imizila emzimbeni wengilazi elifomileyo ngenxa youkuqanda kwebhiya.

“Themba,” ngatsho sikhathi sinye ngiqhweba ubhameni ukuthi kasondele ngimtshele okunathwayo esikufunayo.

“Sakubona makhelwane,” nguThemba lowo ekhulumela emazinyweni. Ngitsho lokuthi avuse ikhanda. Ngasengingumakhelwane wabo okweminyaka engamatshumi amabili. Yena lodadewabo ngababona bekhula.

“Kodwa asisengomakhelwana,” waqhubeka uThemba, “njengoba mina lodadewethu sesihlala eLondon lapho okuphilwa ngokugada izitimela kuyiwa kulo msebenzi laku lowa kudingwa imali nsukuzonke, sikhathi sonke.”

“Ukwenzel’ ukuthi abalapha ekhaya bayikholise imali yethu,” wengezelela uCaroline ebukele ngesikhala esasiku khetheni lebhambu, abanye babantu ababeze emfeni bebanga imilenze yenkukhu eyayisele. “Yekela babe bhizi khonangale kulokuthi beze lapha bezitshaya abazosiduduza. Besekuvele sekungokunye simi phandle kwetshetshi. Uwonke-wonke esesithi, ‘Usizi olunganani,’ ‘Kufuna liqine’ besikhumbuza ukuthi ubaba wake waba ngumuntu ophumeleleyo. Inengi labo bengingakaze ngibabone. Ngiyabona bebezozithaphela ukudla kwamehlo.”

“Ukuxwayisa kwakhona,” watsho uThemba. “Uyakwazi ukuthi uMisisi Moyo uthe ngiboya kumacheck-up zikhathi zonke. Ucabanga ukuthi lami ngizacina njengobaba yini?”

“Wazini?” yimi ngiphendula. “Ngokuba ngumsizi wabonesi usesithi simbize sithi Dokotela Moyo. Wayevele engekho into le iqala Themba, wayekhona? Wayesizwa ngamahungahunga. Thina sasikhona konke kuqala.”

“UJojo aze aphose ukugxotshwa yimota,” wanyenyeza uCaroline.

“Ehlezi egodini elaliphakathilaphakathi komgwaqo,” watsho uThemba ekhulumela phansi.

“Udrayiva wathethisa uyihlo ecabanga ukuthi nguyise uyise kaJojo,” yimi ngingezelela. Ngaleso sikhathi okuJojo kwakuleminyaka embili. Okunkabi kwakuthole indlela yokuvula igedi kwaphuma. Unina wayesebenzela imuli kaJeremiah, ebhadalwa ngokuhlala endlini yezisebenzi eyayingemuva kwendlu enkulu.

“Isingidakile indawo le,” watsho uThemba esithi lothu. Wakhangela ithebuli yebha eyayisingcole yaze yasindeka ngengcekeza. Wanyaza esiswa uzhizhi lwabantu phandle wasesithi, “Ngicela usise ngekhaya malume.”

Savikana labantu benyakazela, ngitsho loyedwa owasibonayo siphuma. Inkalakatha yemota, ehamba ngalaba abalemali zabo, yayisele yapakela eduzane lemota yami kakhulu, kwasweleka sona isikhala sokuvula umnyango ngakucele lika drayiva. Ngasengivula isivalo esiqondane lesikadrayiva, ngatshukutshukutsha ukuthi ngeqeke ngakucele lika drayiva, ngapha ngivikana legiya yemota. UThemba loCaroline labo bancengancenga bangena. Kwakusithi ngichasise ukuthi umuntu owake waba ngu *managing director* njengami, kwasekutheni sengihamba ngehlahla lemota. Isikhathi kwakungayisiso esokuxoxa ngalokho. Ngingakarivesi yakhala igiya yathi kle! Ngayikhupha kwezinye sangena umgwaqo oya koJeremiah. Kwakunzima ukubona phambili ngenxa yelanga elaselikhothome, lingiphandla. Ukuphandla kwelanga kwakuhlangene lothuli olwaluvuswa zimota emagodini asethareni, lomhlambi wemota.

“Bhasopa!” waklabalala uCaroline. Ngathingithi mehlosuka ngabona nansi iSUV isiza isiqonde nta, ngapha izama ukwedlula ikhombi. Ngayitshila ngaphuma emgwaqweni kwasala kancane ukuthi singqikilane leSUV. Kwasukuma uthuli. Kwathi ngisabona luvilibana kanjalo ngenxa yothuli ngabona nangu undoda wegabha lakhe elithunqayo phambi kwemota. Ngayitshila njalo ukuthi ngingamthuzi. Ngaqobotsa ngamandla. Ngesula izithukuthuku ngakhangela emuva ukuthi ngibone isimo salobaba wegabha lakhe. Wayengazange athi thiki. Kwathi nxa ukhangele intuthu isukuma egabheni lakhe, ndawonye lothuli, lelanga selisiyatshona, kwangathi londoda wetheswe isigombolozu sobungcwele. Odrayiva ababengemuva kwethu batshaya amahuta. “Kuyin’ okwenzakalayo lapha.

Umntu wonke usehlanya,” watsho uCaroline ngezwi lokhanyiweyo. Saqhubeka ngohambo lwethu, sithule zwi.

Sithe singena owethu umgwaqo ngasikokotela isidrayivo, ngaqinisa imdlambula ngaze ngatshaywa likhanda. Ngangiwuzonda nkosi yami umgwaqo lo. Laba ababili ababelami emoteni batshedatsheda kwakhanya ukuthi sebethwele nzima. Ngathi ngisima egedini, uThemba waphuma emoteni wavula igedi elaselihwaya phansi. Ngangena ngemota ngaze ngayamela emnyango wekhithini. Ngalinda ukuthi uThemba afike emoteni singenisane. UCaroline wayesengenile ekhithini. Wafika wagcwalisa igedlela ngamanzi okwenza itiyi. Uthe elayitha igedlela thina sihlala ezitulweni zekhithini ezazihamba letafula yazo. UThemba wahlikihla ubuso bakhe ngesandla, wasegijimisa iminwe phezu kwetafula engathi uyaqoqoda, qede wagoqa izandla.

“Okuhle ngokuba sekhaya yikuthi abantu babiza isibongo sethu sako Sithole kuhle,” watsho uThemba. “Le eUK bathi ‘Sit-hole’ kumbe ‘Sith-ough-l,’ abakaze bamuzwe u ‘h’ ophefumulelwayo. Bacabanga lokuthi kuzo zonke indimi zomhlaba, u ‘e’ uthule.” Wanqekuzo ikhanda uCaroline wagunqula amehlo. Waqhubeka uThemba: “ILondon ayimnandi kangako kodwa okuhle yikuthi akulamuntu osaziyo. Lapha singabantwana bommdala obehlanya, obesizwa amazwi emtshela ukuthi avale amagodi asemgwaqweni. Angithi bamupha amabizo bathi nguMnumzana Magodi kumbe uMinista wemigwaqo. Abawasebenzisi lamabizo nxa bekhuluma lathi. Nxa besibona abantu bavula umkhandlo behlukane okolwandle lweRed Sea luvulwa nguMoses. Singadlula ubabona sebebuyelelana besiba yizixuku njalo ukuthi baqhubekele phambili besinyeya.”

“Ngangileminyaka elitshumi lanhlanu eqala ukukhuluma yedwa,” watsho uCaroline. Ngahle ngama ukumema abangane ukuthi beze ngakithi. Ngasengimzonda ubaba, ngisithi nguye osephoxe impilo yami. Angithi ekuqaleni wayeliqhawe lami, ekhaliphile, engenza ngihlale ngihleka, bonke abangane bami befisela ukuthi ngabe balobaba onjengaye. Kwaphonguthi phithi, waba ngumuntu osehlala engcolile egqoke amayikayika, engasangazi lokuthi ngingumtanakhe. Ngangithi nxa ngikhuluma laye aqhuzule amehlo okomuntu okhangele ulutho olungale kwami aphenjule ngokuwumana. Ngatshela umama ukuthi kungcono amtshiye, amdiveose sibili.”

“Wayethi nxa ephendula, ubone ukuthi uphendula omunye umuntu hatshi wena, omunye umuntu osekhanda lakhe,” wengezelela uThemba. “Kwakungathi ulalele, abesenqekuzo ikhanda engathi usezwe okuqakathekileyo kulokho akuzwayo. Eqeda lapho athathe yonke into esendlini lasengadini akufolise konke. Kwesinye isikhathi kwakungathi kuyamehlula ukulandela okuyabe kutshiwo yilizwi, uthole esekhathazekile,

adilize imizila abeseyenzile aqale kutsha, aphambanise kakhulu, azonde ngamandla. Kodwa ngemva kwesigigaba sika Jojo, kwabangamagodi emgwaqweni, nsukuzonke.”

“Umama wasemtshiya,” wayithathela lapho indaba uCaroline. “Wathi yena uzakuya kwabanye abemuli yangakubo eGoli, athole umsebenzi ozwayo obhadala imali kuzwa. Ubona engathi yimi engenza ukuthi atshiyane lobaba ngoba ngathi enze njalo malume?”

Nganikina ikhanda kancane, ngifisela ukuthi ngabe ngiyabuthoba ubuhlungu abuzwayo. “Lathi sasesihamba. Ngiyazi ukuthi abantu basigcona kakhulu ngokutshiya ubaba yedwa esakwenzayo. Kodwa kwasekwehlule ukuthi sihlale laye.” Wathi eqeda ukuthso njalo uCaroline wakhangela phandle ngewindi, ecwayiza kokuphela samuntu ophandliweyo. “Ngiyaxolisa ukuthi sakutshiya wedwa ukuthi umnakekele, thina sesibaleke samagundwane ensimini etshayo.”

“Kwakulula kimi,” yimi lowo, “ngoba ngingayisiso sihlobo segazi, ngingumakhelwane. Uyihlo ngamazi isikhathi eside sempilo yakhe, okwenza ngezwa kuqondile ukuthi ngimnakekele loba nje kwakunzima ukumkhangela sonke isikhathi. Kwakulukhuni ukubona indoda eyakeyabayindoda emadodeni isigqoke amadabudabu ingelabani engathi ngumngane ngaphandle kwefotsholo. Uyaz’ ukuthini? Mhlawumbe sonke siyahlanya njengaye.”

“Uqonde ukuthini?” nguThemba lowo esevungama.

“Asikukhangele ngale ndlela. Nxa silendubeko siyazama ukuthola amacebo okuziqeda. Besesizama lawo macebo. Esikhathini, esikuzamayo akusebenzi; kungenza lodubo luqhele lusabalale njengoqethu. Asithathe umzekeliso wabantu abanathayo. Umuntu wakhona nxa enatha, uyakhohlwa ngodubo. Kuthi utshwala sebuphelile ekhanda athole ukuthi uhlupho lwakhe lokhe lujamile; athole ukuthi usezewaluqhelisa ngokunatha lokhu. Thina-ke, siyabaleka sonke, sidinga ukuba khatshana lodubo lwethu. Kodwa uyihlo wayekhangela lodubo lwakhe, aluqonde mathupha angakhekhelezi. Mhlawumbe kwakumnceda ukuthi isimo sakhe singabi sibi kakhulu. Kwakungathi ulobizo. Ngemva kokwetheswa umlandu wokuthi uJojo watholakala emgwaqweni, ezihlalele egodini engathi yinyoni enkulu hatshi umntwana – kwangathi kusukela ngalelo langa umsebenzi wakhe emhlabeni kwakuzoba ngowokwenqabela abanye abantwana kulokhu okwakwenzakale kuJojo. Uphile ngendlela ebigcwalisa amabizo awaphiwa ngabantu: Mnumzana Magodi, uMinista wemigwaqo.”

“Siyabonga ukusiduduzo. Kodwa ukhuluma ngaye engathi wayekucabangile ayekwenza, wasekhetha ukuphila ngaleyo ndlela. Heyi,

Caro, itiyi ayikalungi? Uyilayithile nje igedlela?” UCaroline wamuthi jeqe ngelikhulumayo umnewabo, wasesukuma.

“A-yah! Akulamagetsi. *Futhi*. Kuphela kodubo esingelalo phetsheya kolwandle – ukucitshwa kwamagetsi,” watsho ezohlala phansi lapho ayesukume khona. “Ngiyayibona kodwa into etshiwo ngumalume. Sobabili Themba sihlala khatshana lapho okungela zihlobo zethu. Nxa sisiya emsebenzini sigada isitimela okomango olingana lokusuka lapha usiya eGweru. Ebusika siphuma endlini kumnyama, sisuke emsebenzini ngobunyama. Lalapho esisebenza khona siyazi ukuthi asisoze sathola izikhundla eziphezulu. Siyesaba lokuzala. Yikuhlanya lokho kumbe yini? Ngiyazi ubaba wayethunywa ngamazwi ayewezwa, mhlawumbe ikhona imiphefumulo eyasinda ngenxa yokugqibela kwakhe amagodi. Angiboni ukuthi ngingathi owami umsebenzi ulakho ukusiza umphefumulo womuntu.”

“Mhlawumbe kunjalo, kodwa owakho umsebenzi ngezake ukubulale,” watsho uThemba. “Kuyini sibili okwenzakalayo malume? Asikatholi umuntu osichasisela kuhle, ongasitshela indaba yonke.” Eqeda ukutsho njalo ngambona eqaza ubuso bami uThemba. “Angithi nguwe owaqala ukufika lapho atholakala khona. Akunjalo?”

Ngaqala ngokuwisa iphika. “Kunjalo sibili. Ngangijayele ukuthi ngifike endlini okwensuku ezithile ngeviki. Unina kaJojo wayelokhe elungisa endlini abuye aphekele uyihlo. Lokhu kokubili wayekwenza nxa uyihlo engekho endlini. UnakaJojo wayenanzelela ukuthi atshiye izinto ngendlela ayabe ezithole ziyiyo, esenzela ukungazondisi uyihlo. Ngalelolanga ngafika ngakhangekhangela. Yonke into yayikhanya ilungilile. Ngasengibuyela ngakwami ngedlulela emsebenzini. Ekhoneni eliseduze lalapha, kwakugejwe umgelo wanquma ingqxenye yomgwaqo. Sesikujayele ukugejwa lokhu, siyazi futhi ukuthi imigelo yakhona iyingozi. Umgelo lo kwakungathi uqgitshelwe ngenhlabathi wasala kancane ukugcwala. Ngadrayiva kancane ngilanda umgelo. Eceleni ngabona ifotsholo. Ngibone ngekaJeremiah. Ngangizahle ngiyibone loba ngaphi ngendlela isibambo esasibotshwe ngayo ngocingo langendlela eyayisigobe ngayo phambili. Lwangitshaya lwangiqeda uvalo. Ekuboneni kwami ukuthi kwakungesinhlabathi eyayisemgelweni ngafaka amahazadi emota ngaya emgelweni. Kwakunguye. Umzimba wakhe yiwo owawuvale umgodini, ekhangele phansi. Imizila yamathaya ezimota emgogodleni wakhe yayibika ukuthi umgogodla wawephukile. Ukuthi wayewele njani emgelweni aze acine engene ngalohlobo kwangidida. Kwakungela mtshudutshudu yemota ekeyazama ukubhrekha.”

“Amapholisa athe esitshela athi uthuzwe yimota engazange ime,” watsho uThemba. “Kungani ungasitshelanga konke lokhu ekuqaleni?”

“Ngilitshele phambi kwabosomangase abazokhala ezengwenya? Ukwenzela ukuthi besuka lapho sebequkethe okungamaqatshana okumnandi, samgodoyi ithathela umntwana inyama yakhe?”

“Uqondile malume. Lakhathesi asizange sibe lokuthula ngenxa yabomathand’ izindaba. Ubaba bakithi,” watsho uCaroline efinya. “Angazi kumbe wayekubona kusiza, ukuthi ingcwaba lakhe lizakuba ligodi endleleni.”

Sasingela ngxoxo ngelanga elilandelayo ngisisa uThemba lodadewabo egcekeni lendizamtshina. Impahla zabo ziqeda kwamukelwa bangena bayalinda bengaphakathi. Ngabanga bobabili ngahamba. Ekubuyeleni kwami edolobheni ngadlula imigoqo yamapholisa eminengi. Ngangicabanga ngezinsuku zami loJeremiah, ngilangazelela insuku zobuntwana bethu siselusa imbuzi, sitshengisa iloba ngubani odlulayo ubuntshantshu bethu entweni ezithize. Enzikini yedolobho ngahamba kancane sengiqaphele abahamba ngenyawo. KwakuyiSonto abantu besiya ensontweni. Ngibone nanguya uNkosikazi Moyo, ukhanya mgceke phandle kwe Faithful Followers Fellowship, egqoke okulithanga okuthe kla kusukela eqhiyeni kusiya emazwaneni. Njengenhlayenza, nguye owayebuthanelwe. Wayezama ukuxotsha umphorofithi lowa owegabha elithunqayo emnyango wensonto. Nganikina ikhanda, ngahleka kancane ngamtshayela ispotoni umphorofithi wegabha ngedlula.

Ubuqhawwe thutshu

Murenga Joseph Chikowero

Nganyenama njengelema. Kusenzeka, ngangizakuphosela khatshana le okungamaqanda engangikuphethe. Kwakungiyangisa imihlolo. Ngangizathi ngokukulahla ngigijime ngintshobebe emtshoveni wokuqala owawuzathutsha ngaleso sikhathi, ngibuyele eyunivesithi. Kodwa ngitsho lokuthi ngithi tshedu. Ngama mpo okwenkalakatha yendoda enqunu. Ukuthanda izinto lokhu! Ngangithatheke ngalandela umzawami uMarimo. Ngangilandele konke ayekutshilo, ngazithola sengijamile lami elayinini labanengi. Ngalinda ngesikhulu isineke. Nanko-ke. Isifundi sezinga elingaphezulu kwezemfundo sengijamile emphakathini, ngiphethe ithireyi yamaqanda, sandoda wokuthengisa uJesu ebhayibhilini, uJudas Iscariot, owathi laphe eseyitholile leyo mali wadinga waswela ukuthi enzeni. Okwangenza ngathatheka, yikufuna ukubona ukuthi uMarimo wayeqinisile sibili ukuthi ibandla elibusayo lalizaholisa abantu amaqanda ngalelo langa. Ngikuzwa lokho, ngaqhaqheka ngohleko. Izinto ziyenzeka. Ngangisazi yini ukuthi ngaleyo mini umzawami uzehlelwa yibuqhawe engabulindlele; butshaye umazivelela nje?

Mina ngangingelani lawo amaqanda njengomuntu owayesidla esutha eyunivesithi. Kodwa ngazithola sengihlabele ingoma zenkululeko (loba nje ngangihlabelela phansi engathi ngiyangunguna) lomuntu wonke owayelindlele amaqanda ngesikhathi esethulwa ngobunengi bawo ezimoteni. Phela ukuhlabelela kwakuyindlele yokuzilibazisa lokuzithela umfutho. Khonokho ngezwa kuqubuka ukudla esiswini, sekusithi ngikhiphe ngenxa yokuyangeka okungelamkhawulo. Ngathalathalaza indawo yonke ngithi mhlawumbe ningabona okunye okungumntwana okuhawulayo, ngikuphe amaqanda. Kwakungathi liphupho konke lokhu, futhi kuhlekisa. Ngubani sibili osewake wezwa kuthiwa ibandla lezombangazwe liholise abantu amaqanda? Kodwa, eZimbabwe yethu, imali yayingasathengi lutho. Kwasekusehlula zona ngcitshi zenombolo ukuthi zitsho isiqubu imali eyayiphela ngaso amandla. Kwasekusehlula lemitshina yokuxhophoza lezombolo. Engitshela ngaloludaba lwamaqanda ekuseni umzawami, ngahleka ngazengakhala, kusala ukuthi ngiyikholwe lendaba. Hawu, ibandla

lezombangazwe elaselibuse iminyaka engamatshumi amabili lasitshiyagalombili, liyibambe ngasesidukwini, yilo sibili elaselincenga abantu ngamaqanda? Kwasekungathi ipolitiki ilobudlelwano obuqinileyo lokusweleka kokudla okwakha umzimba elokitshini. Angithi vele abanye ontanga abahlakaniphileyo basebephila ngokukhupha amabhakane ensimbi asemigwaqweni bewathengisela abancibilikisa lezo nsimbi benze okunye okuthengiswayo. Isabindana ekhanda yonke le micabango, wangigudla ingalo omunye umuntu. Athi phu phansi amaqanda kwaba yinhlikinhliki phambi kwami.

“La kawafanga kakhulu, mntanami,” kutsho omunye umama. Ilizwi lakhe langikhumbuza owami owayesekade waziphumulela. “Nanko, thatha la,” watsho eseqotsheme phansi ekhetha afe ngcono echibini lokumhlophe lokulithanga. Yimi loya nginikina ikhanda ngisuka ngizihambela. Loba nje ngangiyangekile, ngasengisizwa ngcono ngoba engasekho ezandleni zami amaqanda. Ngamtshiya ethabe okwamagama umama wokubutha amaqanda lapho engibona ngifulathela. Waqhubeka edobha angafanga kakhulu.

“Yeyi, Chiko, ususiyangaphi?” Ngumzawami lowo. Wayelomzimba omncane ozacileyo, engathi ngokuyisiqhunyana. Phela wayeyiqhelile into yakhe yokutshela abantu ethi ngingumnewabo. Ngekuseni yalelolanga ngamangala ngisizwa ontanga beqembu lakhe lezombangazwe bembiza ngelokuthi *Comrade Advance*. Kwaba nzima kimi ukuthi ngikukholwe sibili ukuthi nguye lo mzawami esakhula sonke, safunda sonke, obethembisa abazali bakhe kumnyaka odluleyo ukuthi uzafunda aqinise, apase, aye eyunivesithi afundele ubudokotela. Wayethe nxa esesebenza uzagcina kuhle abazali bakhe. Ekuphumeni kwempumela yokuthi wayeqhube njani ezifundweni zakhe, umzawami watshintsha. Wenza esikafudu, wantshobelisa ikhanda phakathi, engafuni kubonwa muntu. Kwakungadingeki ukuthi ngimbuze ukuthi upasile na. Kwakuzikhanyela mgceke ukuthi kwehlule. Yikho nje kwathi izinto zibheda elizweni, uHulumende edinda imali entsha *itrillion dollars* elabo *zero* abanengi, ababets Shayisa ngekhanda nxa uthi uyababala, uMarimo yena wahle wangena ezombangazwe. Wezwakala ekhonona

nga-‘bathengisi’ le-‘zitha zethu’ okomuntu ongasukela ngasikhatshana abathengisi labo kunye lezitha. Wayesegxile impande ku*Youth* yebandla elibusayo. Wayesezizwa lokuzizwa, ehamba ekhukhumele njengalokhu ayekwenza impumela yesikolo ingakaphumi. Laselimuphe impilo entsha ibandla elibusayo, lona kanye elamaxhegu ayetshela yiloba ngubani olesikhathi sokulalela, ukuthi wona alifela ilizwe! Wawubezwa nje bempompoloza bekhohlisa abantu. “Umhlabathi sesilawo. Osekusele yizinto zokuthi silime,” nguMarimo lowo ngenye imini etsho engitshengisa igama

lakhe kuphephandaba likaHulumende. Phela uHulumende wayesabela abantu umhlabathi, kungakhathalekile ukuthi ngubani ophiwayo. Nanku phela labo Marimo, ama *born-free*, babuye babe ngoborn-location, umuntu engakaze alibambe ikhuba empilweni yakhe – bawuphiwa umhlabathi! Esinye isimanga kwaba yikuthi uHulumende wayesaziwa ngokweyisa ama *born-free* lama *born-location* anjengo Marimo ngoba leliqembu labantu lingazange lilifele ilizwe. Nanto-ke iphephandaba lalibika ukuthi umzawami wayewutholile sibili umhlabathi kwenye indawo engangingakaze ngizwe langayo, okwakuthiwa yiJompani. Iphephandaba likaHulumende lalivele lingathenjwa. Sasingakaze siyizwe ngitsho leyo ndawo. Ngazibona sengilaluke ngambuza ukuthi sibili yayikhona eZimbabwe iJompani leyo.

“Usuke wayayibona indawo yakho?” Ngambuza umzawami ngifihla uhleko ngokuzikhwehlelisa.

“Hatshi, kodwa kulomunye umngane wami othi indawo yakhona iseseligusu. Bengilesifiso sokuthola umhlabathi kulamapulazi esiwathathela amabhunu.”

“Kodwa kumele uqale *somewhere*, angithi?” yimi lowo ngimgolomba.

“Khona kunjalo. Kodwa ngizwe kuthiwa indawo yakhona ligusu elilenkalakatha yezihlahla ezingasukumiyo. Usitshiyile omunye webandla lethu elibusayo emva kokuzama ukugamula inkalakatha yesihlahla ngehloka. Kungasenani, sithole inhlangano yomumbu lefethalayiza okwakhathesi,” watsho kukhanya ukuthi ingqondo yakhe ikhatshana.

“Hawu, lithole lezo zinto?” Kwabayimi lowo sengimangele. Ngangingazi ukuthi esami isihlobo soqotho sasesikutholile lokhu uHulumende ayephethe ekuthembisa abantu ngendaba yomhlabathi, okwakuke kuthiwe yimpi. Yayikhulunywa langa-phuma langa-tshona indaba yomhlabathi.

“Yikho sibili abasiphe khona. Kodwa badube ngokusipha imigodla elitshumi eyenhlangano, lemihlanu eyefethalayiza umuntu munye ngamunye, kwasekuphelele.” Wachasisa uMarimo.

“Kunengi. Kodwa, kungaphi?” Ngasengithunywa yikuthanda izinto manje!

“Okunye ngikuthengisile... ngitsho okunengi kwakhona... ukuthi ngibe lokuyimadlana kokugada ngiyebona ipulazi lami elitsha phela. Kodwa lawe uyazi ukuthi indaba yemali imi njani kulezinsuku? Sokumele ngizame amanye amacebo okwengezelela leyo mali ngenxa yokuhlala isiwa.” NguMarimo lowo waze wakhwixiza amahlombe, etshengisa ukudideka okukhulu. Ngambukela ehotsha ngamandla igwayi lakhe lomgoqwa, engathi lokho kwakuzaletha imali yokwengeza ayefika eJompani. Kwangidanisa

kakhulu ukubona umzawami esetshenziswa libandla lezombangazwe ukupha abantu amaqanda, ngapha ephupha ngokuyafika eJompani ngelinye ilanga; ilizwe lesithembiso kuye umzawami lomndeni wakhe. Ngakubona ukuthi lelo lizwe lesithembiso lalifana lomfasimba wesiziba samanzi enkangala – into oyibona ngamehlo kodwa uthi usufike kuyo uthole akulalutho. Kodwa umnuko wamanzi angekhoyo yiwo owawusumdonga ngamakhala umzawami.

Ayesephelele ngaphi amaphupho akhe okuya eKolitshini yeCity Polytechnic, lapho ayethi ufuna ukuyataditsha i*Printing Technology*? Lokhu phela wayehlezi ekutsho esebone ukuthi akaseyikungena eyunivesithi. Wayesewathula ngesifiso sakhe ngezinsuku ze*Youth*. Okwasekuhlezi engqondweni yakhe libizo lakhe ephephandabeni likaHulumende. Ngathi ngimvakatshale ngenye impelaviki ngatshona sengikhangele lelophephandaba. Ngangingakuthini engumzawami lumuntu? Ngakhona, lalikhona ibizo lakhe: MARIMO, MARIMO. Kwasekungathi lingivulele amehlo ibizo lakhe. Phela wayengomunye walababantu abalebizo elibuye libe yisibongo.

O, bakithi. Wayesetshintshile umzawami. Nguye sibili owayelamaphupho amakhulu ngemfundo emnyakeni owawusanda kwedlula?

“Singanqoba kule impi, ngitsho kukhetho phela, ayisiyo nje imisebenzi ezavuleka kubutho lesizwe. Sikhangelele ukuthi intsha yethu ithole imisebenzi le.” Wayetsho njalo ekuseni umzawami, mhla welanga lamaqanda. Wayesekhuluma njengengwevu zebandla elibusayo, zona phela ezokutshona zisithi zalifela ilizwe.

“Utsho yiphi impi?” Yimi lowo ngizitshaya ongakwaziyo ukuthi ukhuluma ngani.

“Ubona engathi kwenzakalani wena? Angithi amabhunu asezivezile egcekeni ukuthi ayizitha zelizwe. Sifuna ukubatshengisa kulolukhetho ukuthi sesizibusa thina. Sifuna ukubakhahlelela khatshana le! Sebajayela!” Lamagama, ngiyafunga ngiyagomela, yiwo xathu ayekhulunywe ngumkhulu webandla elibusayo emsakazweni we TV kunsukwana ezazisanda kwedlula. Ngadonda ukumkhumbuza ukuthi lundoda ababemkhankasela wayeseleminyaka engamatshumi amabili lanhlanu elilunga lePhalamende, nxa sesingasabali eminye iminyaka lapho ake waba lilunga lePhalamende ye Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, esebenza labacindezeli.

“Ibhokisanyana lami lamaqanda liwile... omunye umama...” yimi lowo ngizama ukumchasisela.

“Ungazihluphi ngalokho. Sengilungisile konke.”

“Kulesiyelele esingithuze ngemva.”

“Shhhh,” watsho esondeza ikhanda lakhe kwelami. Wangigona wasenyenyeza: “Khohlwa ngalokho mfowethu. Umama usehambe lawethu ngekhaya. Akhona lawokuthengisa futhi!” watsho efica lelihlo.

Wayesitsho unina omzalayo. Ngathula zwi ngamekela eqhubekela phambili. Wawuzibonela lawe ukuthi uthabe kazazi umzawami. Unina kaMarimo ngangimbiza ngisithi mama ngoba ngangike ngahlala lemuli yakhe ngisafunda. Ngangisuke ngakibo kaMarimo umzawami engakabi ngumlimi olima ephepheni; engakabi ngokhankasela ibandla lokuhuga abantu belokitshini ngamaqanda; elokitshini lapho otsotsi asebecathamela abantu ngemva kwenqwabanqwaba zezibi ezazingabuthwa muntu. Ngisacabanga kanje, ngazizwa sengibambabamba ikhadi lami lebandla elibusayo, engangilithole ngalelolanga ekuseni, ngisenzela khona phela ukuthola lawo maqanda!

“Abaphikisana lathi, awabo amaqanda bazawathola kuBlair!” qede wafa ngohleko uMarimo. “Kumbe kuBush”, wengeza engathi wayesekulibele lokho. Kwasala kancane nje ukuthi ngimkhumbuze ukuthi uTony Blair lo George Bush kwasekukade batshiya izihlalo zombuso.

“Sesiqedile angithi?” ngabuza ngendlela yokumtshengisa ukuthi hatshi, akusekho engikufunayo lapha, sengidakekile.

“Hatshi, Chiko!” Wasekhombela ngesilevu phambi kwethu wathi: “Uyayibona ibhawuza yamanzi leya? Igcwele phamu *iriver sand* emnandi ukwedlula yonke ongayithola idolobho lonke.” Amasese yiwo okwakuthiwa *yiriver sand* ngalezonsuku. Yiwo ayenathwa ngabanjengomzawami bewavukela ekuseni liphuma, uzwe umuntu wakhona esithi ‘ngiqeda okulibhabhalazi kwayizolo’. Kanti yikuqala kokudakwa kwalelo langa. Kube yilesa futhi ngelanga elilandelayo! Ayetshiphe efile phela amasese, etholakala emabhawa wonke ayegcwele emalokitshini. Ayephuma empompini samanzi. Amabhawa ayeyitshaya imali, emanengi njalo; uthole encintisana ekuhugeni izakhamizi lamatshetshi emimoya ayesemile asabalala ilokitshi lonke. Ngatshibilika-ke ngathalaza lapho ayekhombela khona ngesilevu. Lalingasatshisi nje ilanga likaMfumfu, selikhupha lomkhoba edwaleni. Ngasengibona kungcono ukuthi ngizibuyelele lomzawami kwakhe, ngitshaye ishawa eqandayo loba nje ngangizagezela endlini yokugezela ababeyisebenzisa ndawonye lezinye izakhamizi. Kwakungamangalisi-ke ukuthi indlu yokugezela yayitshelale engathi iledelele phansi. Okunye engangikufisa ngaleso sikhathi, ngamanzi aqandayo okunatha. Ngangizathi ngiqeda ukugeza lokunatha ngivalelise ngiqonde eyunivesithi. Kanti ubaba yena vele wayekufunelani ukuthi zikhathi zonke nxa ngikukhefu, ngiyechitha isikhathi kumfowabo, uyise kaMarimo? Kambe kungaba ngenxa yembali yokuthi babeke bangigcina

okweminyaka emibili ngisesikolo? Ingxoxo yethu lomzawami yayingasahambelani ngitsho! Kwakungasatsho kimi ukuthi ngitshone laye uMarimo noma okwesikhatshana nje. Ngangiphanga ngidakeke.

“Uyabona Marimo, uyakwazi lawe ukuthi anginathi mina.”

“Suka lapha mfowethu. Utsho ngoba usunatha obesikhiwa yini? Lobu phela obudula okwamagama.”

“Hatshi. Vele esinye sezizatho esingenza nginganathi yiso esokuthi amakhiwa asivimbela ukuziphekela obethu utshwala, befuna sinathe obabo. Nanku phela imali lenzuzo, konke kuya kubo. Bancedwa ngabantu abanjengawe, abangathathi sikhathi sokucabanga ukuthi....”

Wakhweza amahlombe wabuye wawawisa. “Kulungile, kulungile bhud ’omkhulu! Ngiyazi ikulindele imbodlela yakho ye *whisky* eyunivesithi. Bamba la. Ngilezigubhu lezi ezimbili. Ngizakupha esinye sazo. Nxa ungasifuni, ulakho ukusedlulisela kumfowenu.” Wabuye wahleka uMarimo, ehleka ubuphoxo bakhe.

“Kwenzakala nini konke lokhu? Sokumele ngihambe. Ngilesikolo kusasa mina.”

“Njani, khona lamuhla kunguMgqibelo?”

“Ngile *prac* elebhu,” ngatsho ngiwahutshuza njalo ngisazi ukuthi ngingathi ‘*prac*’ wayezathatheka, ahlabeke ukwedlula nxa ngithe *practical*.

Wangicijisela amehlo, engathi ngomunye walaba abathenga imali ezindala, ehlola ukuthi yiyo sibili ayifunayo noma nje irusile. Wasesithi, “Kulungile. Asiqedelane lalokhu, sibuhambise ngekhaya utshwala bethu. Ngemva kwalokho usungaziyela lapho ofuna khona.” Nango ebuyela elayinini yotshwala eyayisinde kakhulu.

Abantu babexokozela, kukhulunywa, kumenyezwa sikhathi sinye – ngitsho lolalela omunye. Ngasengiqondiqondisa ikepesi yami, ngabukela ngamehlo avaleke mbijana. Basebekhanya engathi ludwendwe lobunyonyo abantu, lobunyonyo bakhona kuyilobu osebucijise umlomo omude wokunatha. Khonokho nje, bayisusa ingoma yenkululeko:

Woba liqhawe, woba liqhawe,

Woba liqhawe, woba liqhawe,

Unqobe isitha!

Unqobe isitha!

Obunye ubuqhawe! Amaqhawe abanga amaqanda? Ngasengitshibilika ukuthi ngitsake amathe ngoba kusenyanyisa lokhu. Ngabona nantu unwabu olumabalabala khonapho engifuna ukukhafulela khona. Ngawagcina amathe. Ngapha yayisitsha ingoma; ikhwela, isehla. Wayeyithatha okhalelayo

engathi uyabahlokoza abanye bakhe, bayiqage labo bayiphosele kuye makhalela ngomfutho. Kube njeya! Ngapha ngemuva kwami, ayesethulwa ama khirethi amaqanda. Nanso laso isisu sonwabu lolu olumibalabala sikhukhumala, sibohla. Sisengabantwana, sasingafuni lokulubona unwabu ngoba lulingisela imibala yezigqoko zethu. Sasiluhlasela kakubi kuthi lanxa silubhula luqhubeke ngenkalakatha yenkani luthatha imibala yezigqoko zethu. Phela sasicabanga ukuthi lwalusipha umnyama lowo oluthethe umbala weyembe yakhe. Lolu lona lwaselungithe nhlo ngamehlo alo ayizigomboloji, engathi solubona konke okusenhliziyweni yami. Ngaluzwela lolunwabu. Ngadinga isigodo sokuluthwalela khatshana ukuthi lungaxotshwa ngabantu. Ngingakakwenzi lokho, ngezwa esengibiza uMarimo. Ngatshiyana lalo ngaya kuye.

Wangiphosela izigubhu zama 20 litres ezimbili waqhubeka eklabalala lentsha yebandla lakhe. Bucwadelana nje abanye babo babebophela ezihlahleni amaphepha alomfanekiso alo ababemkhankasela. Ngasengicela elinye lalamaphepha komunye untombazana owayegqoke waphelala ngempahla yebandla. Ngibone nangu sibili lundoda okhankasayo! Phambi kwebizo lakhe, kubhalwe, 'Prof'. Wayegqoke amangilazi wawehlisa aze abanjwa yinkalakatha yekhala elisakhwa, elicazimulayo. Ebulele ngokubobotheka! Ngaphezudlwana kwalomfanekiso kwakulokamongameli webandla. Yena-ke wayengathi kalaqiniso lokuthi enzeni – abobotheke kumbe aqhuzule amehlo ekhangele ikhamera. Umfanekiso kamongameli webandla wawungowakudala. Kade sasiwubona; kusukela sithola uzibuse! Ngalezonsuku zokuthola uzibuse zaziqala ukuba mhlotshana inwele zakhe, zigqagqele ubuso bakhe obugcweleyo. Kuzothi ngensuku zamaqanda, inwele zakhe zasezimnyama bhuqe, zicazimula elangeni.

“Chiko, Chiko! Qhuba esisodwa isigubhu.” Ngathalaza phezulu ngabona nanguya khonale emqongweni uMarimo, umi phezu kwelele. Ngaphanga ngabona ukuthi kwakungahle kuvele ingozi ngoba ilele lingamanga kuhle. Wayelwisana lesivalo sebhawuza egcwele amasese. Ingoma yenkululeko yayisitshintshile, sebedobhe enye. Lomzila wokufolela amaqanda wawusudilikile. Yimi lowa ngizithukuza phakathi kwabantu, ngihlatshwa zindololwane ezicijileyo, ngapha amazwi abomama sekungathi zinyeza, imiphimbo isilangazelela utshwala bamahala. Owayebambe ilele ukuthi lingawi kwakungomunye undoda owayegqoke isikipa somkhankaso wokhetho olwedlula kudala. Lesikipa sakhona yikho nje sasiyinkalakatha, simgqokile umnikazi. Ekhoneni yomlomo wayebambe okuyisitompukwegwayi. Ngaqhubeka ngisunduzwa, ngilalamela, ngaze ngamqhubela isigubhu umzawami. Wasigwegwa ngozwane olukhulu, etshengisa ubuciko obukhulu entweni lezi.

Ngama ngaxamalaza ngisenzela ukuthi abafuqanayo bangangisondeleni kakhulu. Ngamlindela uMarimo ukuthi angiqhubele isisigubhu sokuqala singagcwala. Kulomunye umama owayeklabalalela endlebeni yami. Laye wayegqoke isikipa esilomfanekiso kamongameli ebutsheni bakhe. Ngazibuza ukuthi kanti sibili yini eyayinonisa omama laba izinto zona zinzima kangaka? Phezulu ebhawuzeni ngibone nantuya unyawo lomzawami. Yilo lodwa olwaselukhanya ngoba yena eselalamele phakathi kwebhawuza ukuze akhelele kuhle isigubhu sakhe. Yenzakala inkemenkeme! Nampo besunduzana abantu emuva! Azwakale phezu kwami umama lowa wesikipa sakhe. Yimi lami ngiwela le, eceleni. Lo owayebambe ilele wayesethetha okwamagama ngoba wonke umuntu esemnyathela. Kwelikade ngazithola sengiphumile enzikini yabuntu. Ngasengihluzukile, ngithithibele njalo sengiqhula. Wonke umuntu wayekhomba emqongweni webhawuza, abanye behlaba umkhosi, abanye bememeza.

Kulapho ke engananzelela ukuthi wayesewele phakathi kwebhawuza umzawami. Ilele laselephuke kabili ekufuqaneni kwabantu. Amalunga e*Youth* ayesedidene, bekhombela babuye balahle izandla okungapheliyo. Abafazi bona bathathela ngamajubane, besesaba lokhu okwasekwenzakele. Lami ngakhwenyeza, ngazihudula ngayakuma elangeni.

Ngelanga elilandelayo, umnawakhe kaMarimo wangithola ngilalisiwe esibhedlela seyunivesithi. Ngambona esiza ehudula inyawo okongela qiniso lento ayenzayo. Umongikazi owayelapho wamupha isihlalo eceleni kombheda engangilele kuwo. Kwakusithi ngizitshaye oleleyo, kodwa lokhu kwakungasasizi ngoba wayesebonile lumfana ekungeneni kwakhe ukuthi ngikhangele.

“Kezwa kuhle sibili, ngakho unanzelele ukuthi umtshelani,” watsho umongikazi wasedlulela embhedeni olandelayo. Wahlala phansi umzawami, izandla wazivalela phakathi kwemlenze. Wathula zwi, walinda. Lami ngenza engathi kakho vele, ngazikhangelela phandle ngewindi, ngibukele ucigo owayezidlalela khonapho ewindini.

“Abantu baya eMbudzi lamuhla emini,” wavuleka ngelikade, emva kokuba engibingelele ngazithulela. “Ibandla lizabhadalela konke okudingakalayo. I*branch* yebandla imuphe isicoco sobuqhawe esesiliva ngoba efe esebenzela uzulu. Abe *branch* bathe siphange size sobabili.” Ngitsho lokuthi ngithi thiki. Laye wazihlalela. Kwathi ngelikade wavalelisa.

“Ngalahlekelwa ngumzawami kudala,” yimi lowo ngikhwaza ngiwaqondise esiphundu somnawakhe kaMarimo esehamba. Okwangimangalisayo yikuthi ngangithukuthele ngisitsho njalo. Ngatshibilika ngizibukelela loya cigo ewindini qede ngajumeka.

Ngaphaphanyiswa yilizwi likababa, owayezwakala ezonde okwamagama, esithi: “Awusindoda wena? Yikho lokhu ozakwenza nxa usunguseka zibani, usuthethe?” Wayehlezi lapho okwakhlezi umzawami kumahola amabili ayesedlule. Ngangisazi ukuthi nxa enje, ngiwuvale owami. Ngokuya kwesikhathi ngaphuma esibhedlela, ngihamba laye ubaba, owayephethe esithi endabeni yonke le, kwakumele ngitshengise ukuba yindoda. Umongikazi wayengiphe ugodo lokungiphathisa ekuhambeni.

“Ngidrayive ngisuka eKwekwe izolo ebusuku ngisizwa ngokulahlekelwa kwethu lokhu. Ngize lonyoko,” ngubaba lowo eseceleni kwami, sobabili sihamba kancane sizihudula. Loba kwasekuyiminyaka ubaba athatha omunye umfazi, kwakunzima kimi ukuthi ngimbize ngisithi ngumama. Ukuthi ngimbone njengomama kwakuhle kwale. Ngangingazihluphi ngaye. Yikho nje ubaba wayethanda ukungitshela ngaye ngoba ngigabuzi ukuthi unjani.

“Usuyindoda manje,” ngubaba lowo engathi le yinto okwakumele ngiyikhunjuzwe sikhathi sonke ngemva kwemizuzu emihlanu. Ngabambelela ehlobo lakhe, ngaziqhulisa ngamandla. Wayeginqe, izithukuthuku zijuluka zisehla ngesiphika seyembe yakhe emhlophe. Ngomunye walaba abakhula ngesikhathi sabancindezeli, amaBritish. Kuthi lanxa kutshisa umuntu ahlabe isudu aze abophe lethayi. Wayegqoke isudu emnyama, ebophe ithayi, wagqoka lengowane. Mina lobaba sasingajayelananga, singelabo ubudlelwano obabungenza sisomisane, sidlale, siphoxane. Ngangizamphoxa ngalendlela yakhe yokugqoka. Sasesilingana ubude. Yikho wathwala nzima sesiqansa okuluqana okwakulapho esibhedlela, siqonda lapho ayepake khona i*Mini Copper* yakhe ebomvu. Kwakuqine saka okuyimota, ngitsho ukuguga. Ngehlisa iphika ngithola ukuthi wayengezanga laye umam’ omncane esibhedlela.

“Unyoko usele encedisa ngale emfeni,” watsho echasisa ubaba.

Ngaziphosela esihlalweni. Ngambukela esesenza imikhubakhuba yokuvusa imota yakhe. Kwakhonona okuyimota kungathi akufuni kuvuka. Kodwa ubaba wayezimisele ukukuvusa. Kwaya kwazekwavuka. Yithi labaya sinyonyoba siphuma eyunivesithi. Emoteni lapha kwakukhala enye yezingoma zamaKatolika endala. Kanti lumdala wayengakaze awuzwe umculo wama Postoli? Ingoma zabo zasezitshaywa lebhawa uthole lezidakwa zihlabela zihambisana lengoma. Yithi labaya, kancane kancane, singena edolobheni. Sincengancenge sesiqonde eMbudzi, lapho okwakungcwatshwa khona inengi labantu bakulelidolobho.

Wayeke wazama kabili umdala ukuthi sikhulume ngengozi eyayehlele umzawami uMarimo. Ngamane ngamlahla umoya ngazibukelela idolobho

leHarare lokunyakazela kwabantu. Sathi sisima emarobhodini, okungumfanyana okwakuhotsha iglu kwaqhuba isandla sakho esingcolileyo, kukhangeza kimi. Ngakhangela eceleni ingani angikuboni. Kwenye indawo sama ukwenzela ukuthi umdala athenge ukudla. Ngasala ngihlezi emoteni, lapho engakhangwa khona ngokungamantombazana okuncane okubili okwakuzicombacombe okwamagama. Kwakuxoxa ngedlabuzane lomunye undoda okwakusobala ukuthi usekhulile, owayegqoke impahla ezilembala ethe kla! Yindoda bani ekopela imikhono yeyembe ngenkalakatha yezikopela zensimbi ezicazimulayo umkhathi unje? Phezudlwana kwamakhanda abo kwakulebhakane elibhalwe *'Archipelago Nitesport.'*

Esephenduka umdala, izwakale imisindo yezimota zamapholisa. Ukuthula lokhuya obekukhona, du! Ubaba wama wabambeleva esivalweni se *Mini Cooper* ayesasivula. Zazimbili kuphela imota zakhona. Kwacaca kimi ukuthi hatshi, kwakungayisuye umongameli welizwe owayesedlula. Phela ekuqaleni ngisizwa le misindo ngangicabange ukuthi nguye odlulayo. Ngelula intamo ukuze ngibonise ukuthi ngubani oqakathekileyo owayesedlula. Ngemva kwalezi ezimbili imota zamapholisa, kwakulale ethwala izidumbu. Yayilandelwa ngezinye ezimbili ezamapholisa futhi. Zona zazilandelwa yinkalakatha yeroli, umhlobo owindi bemtshova abathi ngamafrayingi pani. Yayigcwele phamu intsha yebandla elibusayo. Bonke babethwele amaflegi ababewandizisa esiyale lale. Abanye babethwele amagwaliba ayebhalwe okutshiyeneyo, kukhanya njalo ukuthi asanda kubhalwa. Isimaqondana lathi iroli ngawakhangelisisa amagwaliba ukuthi abhalweni. Nanto elilenkalakatha yomfanekiso kaMarimo! Ngaphansi kwawo kwakubhalwe: "MARIMO MARIMO: HERO OF THE PEOPLE". Eceleni kweroli kwakugijima intsha yebandla. Begijima kanjalo babezulisa amaflegi lamagwaliba, bekhonya ibizo lomzawami uMarimo.

Kancane kancane, ngaphuma emoteni ngakhangela ubaba owayesemi mpo okwesithombe, eceleni kwemota. Edlula aze abamathathu amaroli elokhu emi ngaloluhlobo ubaba. Onke ayeqonde khona emangwabeni. Ngazithola sengifile yikuhleka, ngaya ngisuka lapho engangimi khona.

"Kuyini?" Ngubaba lowo esemangele.

"Sengibuyela eyunivesithi," ngatsho ngiqhubeka ngitshaya isicathulo. "Abazingcwabele iqhawe labo!" Yimi njalo ngilulahlela khatshala ugodo lokuhambisa. Ngahle ngasila – kwaphela ukuzihudula, kwaphela ukuqhula.

Wafa-wafa

Blessing Musariri

Izulu lakulendawo alila sikhathi somnyaka. Aliqazwa khatshana ezintabeni uma lizakuna, njengezulu lakithi ekhaya. Elakithi nxa lizakuna uhle ulibone lisekhatshana. Elakulelei ubona seliwohloka nje ungalilindele. Ngikhanuka ilanga.

Lapha, ibizo lami ngu Agnes. Akula ozihlupha ngokuhlolisisa umfanekiso osesithupheni sami. Kakho onanzelelayo ukuthi kulomunye uAgnes ongayisimi, ongefani lami ngitsho, oyafike khonapha. Noma nje engafiki zikhathi zonke, kodwa khathesi ngabe ukhona osebonile ukuthi kunuka santungwana lapha. Kodwa ngitsho! Uzwa bephonguthi, “Hawu, yebo Agnes, lamuhla utshintshe istayila senwele. Kodwa mina bengithanda indlela obuzilungise ngayo izolo.”

“Oh, Agnes, uBertie sokumphunyukile, unganceda s’thandwa umtshintshe?”

“Oh, Agnes, usufikile!” Oh, nganceda Nkosi yami. Ngikhanuka isibomvu sakithi, ngibhadule ngenyawo phansi kungabi loyedwa ongibiza esithi nginguAgnes!

Sengilamaviki amabili lapha, kodwa lokhe ngisizwa ngilahlekile. Ungani ngilengile emoyeni, ngitsho lamuntu oyedwa esesike sahlangana njengabantu. Ngitsho lolutho olulodwa olungithinta enhliziyweni. Akukhathalekile kulendawo ukuthi uyavuka ekuseni kumbe utshona ulele. Akutsho lutho ukuthi lizatshona ungakhulumanga lamuntu, ungabonanga muntu, ungathintanga muntu. Akulani lobani ukuthi uyaphila loba ufile. Izulu lina zikhathi zonke, lendawo yakhona ihlala ilenkungu engapheliyo. Ngale kwalinkungu kuzwakala umdumo wezimota ebusuku lemini. Abantu bakhona batshona bejahile. Akula olesikhathi lomunye. Bayaphambana, yisiphithiphithi emgwaqweni. Ezitolo ubingelelwa ngamazwi abawafunde bawaqinisa abathengisi bakhona, njalo bewaphindaphinda – lawe uhle uzibonele ukuthi lokhu kubingelelwa akukho enhliziyweni. Lemafonini yiso

leso. Uhle uzizwele ukuthi intokozo yakhona ngeyokuthi umsebenzi wenziwe nje.

“Oh, Agnes! Usuphendukile emsebenzini, kuhle ukukubona. Usizi olunganani ngokulahlekelwa kwakho.”

“Agnes, sh’tlandwa, wamuhle kangaka, ub’ukukhefu lapho okulelanga khona yini? Ulikholishile ikhefu lakho?”

UOlive ucalaceleni. Uwakhiphile lamazinyo akhe. Lokhu sokusitsho ukuthi ikuseni yonke lamuhla izaphela ngiwadinga. Ufuna ukuthi ngimkame okuzinwele okuthathu okusele ekhanda lakhe elimatshathatshatha. Ngangizibuze ukuthi kwenzeka njani ukuthi zisale zibalwa kanje inwele ngoba kungavavamanga ukuthi umuntu wesifazane aphelelwe zinwele ngaloluhlobo noma eseluphele njengo Olive.

UGloria yena ubengafuni ukuvuka namuhla ekuseni. Yinhlalayenza le, ukwala ukuvuka kodwa acine esevukile. Ngiyakuzwisisa ukuthi uzwa njani. Izolo ekuseni ngithe ngimvusa, wangivulela amehlo wathi, “ Kanti ngise Africa s’tlandwa? Sifike nini?” Phela wayezule lamazwe ngabo 1940. Yikho nje wayethanda ukungixoxela ngenhambo zakhe lezo, lokuhlangana kwakhe labantu abamnyama abalomusa. Phela lalapha wayebabona belomusa abantu abamnyama.

USylvia uthaba abemanzi te nxa ngingena ekamelweni lakhe. Wayekhule ethanda ezomdanso. Ulomzimba obunjwe walingana kakuhle, okukadoli. Kodwa angazonda, uguquka abelamandla ejaha. Uyaluma, akhabe, atshaye ngamampama kwesabeke. Angazi ukuthi usuka angenwe yini. Umile ulungisa inwele zakhe. Uzibambe zabalibhanzi elihle. Akula lolulodwa unwele olufohlileyo.

“Oh, Agnes, besengikukhanuka. Izolo ngitshone ngibanjwe yinkalakatha yenkantsho enyaweni, ngazengafisa ukuthi ngabe ub’ ulapha. Phela nguwe wedwa okwaziyo ukuyiqeda. Usufikile kanje, konke sokulungile.”

“Awusemuhle nje s’tlandwa.” NguArnold lowo. Ebutsheni bakhe wayenguplamba okweminyaka engamatshumi amane lantathu. Kulezikhathi engimthola ethwele ibhobhojane spanela, kumbe enye nje ithuluzi angayithola. Sasizame ukuthi zikhathi zonke singatshiya lutho egcekeni, sisesaba ukubotshiswa yizihlobo zabantu angabalimaza. Ngelinye ilanga ngamthola ethwele imophu.

“Oh, usufikile Agnes. Ungazihluphi, ngizahlikihla lapha engichithele khona amanzi. Phinde ikukhathaze futhi isinki le.” Ulunge okwamagama uArnold, lanxa nje zingasathathi kahle, ebona engathi ulokhe esezinsukwini zakhe zobuplamba. Lamuhla, uyangilanda, athathe zombili izandla zami abesesithi:

“Agnes *dear*, akekho ongatsho yiloba yini engakwenza uzwe ngcono nxa ulahlekelwe ngomthandayo. Umkami seleminyaka elitshumi wangitshiya. Kodwa ungathi ubhubhe izolo lokhu. Kuzathatha isikhathi. Akuphumi engqodweni, kodwa kuya kusibangcono ngokuya kwesikhathi. Kubalula ukukhumbula kulokukhohlwa.” Athi eqeda lapho, abobotheke. Ngazizwa ngikhudumala ngaphakathi okomuntu oselangeni. Bengilesifiso sokubobotheka lami, kodwa zangikhulela inyembezi, ngazithola sengikhala.

Sasithumeza imali yokwakha ekhaya. Enye sasiyibeka eceleni, siyigcinela umtshado. Sasingazimiselanga ukuhlala isikhathi eside. Inyanga eziyisithupha kuphela yizo esasizibekile. Sasikubone kungcono ukuthi sobabili sisebenze ubusuku lemini okwezinyanga eziyisithupha ukuze yenele imali esasiyifuna, sibesesibuyela ekhaya. Sasingayisoli kangako iNgilandi, kodwa ilanga lalisibakhona okwenyanga ezintathu zomnyaka zwi. Kwesinye isikhathi kulezo nyanga zokuphuma kwalo wawulidinga uliswele. Sasikhanuka ekhaya lapho owawuthi noma uwuthanda njani umsebenzi, sasikhona isikhathi sokubona izihlobo labangane. Ekhaya akujahwa lutho. Izitolo ziyavalwa ngoMgqibelo emini. Zimbalwa ezivulwa ngeSonto. Kuyini okunye umuntu angakufuna? Ekhaya wawusuthiseka ngempilo yakhona.

“Okuyikho sibili okulande lapha yini?”

“Uzabe uhlala ngaphi?”

“Ngubani wakho lumuntu?”

“Ufuna ukuhlala okwesikhathi esinganani?”

“Uhlose ukudinga umsebenzi useselapha?”

Ngazipha isibindi engangingelaso phambi komfazi omhlophe nke owayengibuza yonke limibuzo. Kungatshintshanga lutho ebusweni bakhe, wayidinda iphaspoti yami, wangipha inyanga eziyisithupha.

USimba yena wayekwelinye iwindi. Ngambona eqeda eqonda lapho okwakubhoda khona impahla ezazilindele ukuthathwa ngabanikazi. Ngehlisa iphika. Sasibone kungcono ukuthi sehlukane ukuze nxa kusehlula oyedwa, singehluleki sobabili ukungena eNgilandi. Senelisa sobabili ukuyiphendula ngemfanelo imibuzo ababesibuza yona, noma nje impendulo ezinengi zazingamanga.

Sadilika ngohleko sesilapho okulindwa impahla. USimba kulapho angitshela khona ukuthi ibizo ayelisebenzisile kwakungayisilo aziwa ngalo. “Khangе,” watsho engitshengisa iphaspoti yakhe lesithupha sakhe. “Uyabona. AngisuyeSimba, nginguTonderai Mugarisani Macheka,” watsho engitshengisa iphaspoti.

“Ubabakazi nguye owayelikhethile elithi Simba, kodwa abazali bami bala. Isimanga yikuthi yilo wonke umuntu angazi ngalo. Kwazise isifiso sikababakazi siyafezeka. Lami nginje angikwazi ukuthi lakhuliswa yini lelibizo.” Anikine ikhanda okodidekileyo. Mina lami sengimangele. Ngimangaliswa ikakhulu yindlela akhetha abuye asebenzise ngayo amagama. USimba usebenzisa amabala owathola emabhukwini. Thina abanye siwabala siwatshiye khona; yena ukhuluma njengebhuku kwezinye izikhathi.

Umzawami uAgnes wayengiphe amaphepha akhe ekhululekile. Umkakhe phela wayelomsebenzi omuhle wobu*Accountant*, lamaphepha asemthethweni, ngakho uAgnes wayezihlalele engasebezi, ezikhulisela abantwabakhe. Wayebambabamba nxa esedakwe yikutshona endlini.

“*Inesingi* kumbe i *care work* yiyo imisebenzi etholakala lula, futhi elemali engcono kuleminye. Iyakupha isikhathi sokwenza okunye kodwa angifuni kukuyenga – kuyasetshenzwa! Akulula ngitsho.” Ngithe ngitshengisela ukungahlaliseki ngokusebenzisa isithupha sakhe, wangilahla umoya esithi:

“Ha! Mam’omcane, uzihluphelani kanti? Akula loyedwa ozawubona umehluko. Phela bacabanga ukuthi sonke abantu abamnyama siyafanana. Khona ungaba mnyama kakhulu, bahle badideke nje!” Ngangingakukholwa lokho. Ngaze ngazibonela ngawami ukuthi akudingeki ukuthi ulutho lube lengqondo ukuthi lube liqiniso. Lozibumbela khona kungaba liqiniso.

UArnold usemi phandle, ukhanya ephelelwe. Uphethe ugodo lomthanyelo, ibhumbu. Ngubani omekele waphuma phandle? Uzabulawa ngumqando. Kumele ngimbize angene phakathi. Kodwa kusenjalo, ngizibonele ubaba emi mpo ensimini yakhe, okomnumzana ozigqaja ngamabele akhe, ekuseni ilanga liphuma. Asephakeme amabele, afika emlenzeni yakhe. Aluhlaza tshoko, mahle. Ahlekelele ngigijima ngisiya kuye. Mina ngilingana lamabele. Ngithi ngifika kuye, angesule amazolo asezihlathini.

“Rossana, sowake wabubona ubuhle obunje?”

Ngimdumele ubaba. Ngimthandele ngize ngizwe sengikhudumala ngenxa yokukhudumala kwakhe. Nginikine ikhanda, ngizizwe ngijabula kakhulu. Ngimkopele ngamandla.

“Kungathi ligolide Baba,” yimi lowo, ngokuthaba okungela mkhawulo. “Ungathi sinothile.”

UBabette amsize uArnold, amsuse lapho ami khona. Ngizibone sengikhangela longqwaqwane omhlophe nke, osutshise yonke into engadini.

Kungithatha imizuzu engamatshumi amathathu ukufika kulindawo. Sihlala lodadewethu uAnnette. Yena sekujayeyele lapha e London. Useleminyaka emihlanu elapha. Noma ehlala ezansi kwedolobho, ukhuluma alingise abahlala e*East-end*, loba nje abahlala lapho besaziwa ngokuhawula. Wazineda ngokuza lapha masinyane uAnnette ngoba wafika wafundela ukuba ngunesi, wathola isithupha sakhe abantu bengakagwali ekufundeleni ubunesi. Uhola imali enhle kodwa kazihluphi ngitsho ngokugcina enye yakhona.

“Ain’t going back ’ome innit, so I can just enjoy mi loife. I’m still young.”

Nxa ezikhipha labangane bakhe, inwele zilungiswa zilenge, zehle ngentamo. Zigcotshwa amafutha zicazimule ingani zizatshelela ziwe ekhanda. Ugqoka inkalakatha zamacici egolide, ayizigombolozu, agqoke oqwa abakhonale emqogweni, azenze-ke akuthi yi *‘Jamaican rude gyal’*. Ngelinye ilanga uSimba wazewamphoxa esithi uzabanjwa ngumqando ngaphambili ngoba egqoke okuyisiketi okungafiki ndawo ngobufitshane. UAnnete waphendula ngokumtshengisa umunwe waphakathi. Wafa ngohleko uSimba. Ngacina ngalelo langa ukuzwa uSimba etshaya uhleko oluphuma enhliziyweni.

Abazali bakaSimba bafela engozini yebhasi, eseseleminyaka elitshumi. Wazibhoda zonke izihlobo zakhe, waze wacina esehlala lomalumakhe owayengumphathisikolo kwenye iMishini. Uthi yiso isikhathi sempilo yakhe asikholisayo. Njengoba umalumakhe wayehlala esikolo, lokho kwakusitsho ukuthi uSimba laye wayehlala lapho isikhathi sonke somnyaka. Uthi lokhu kwakungamhluphi ngoba kwakumupha ithuba lokutshona elayibhurari. Yikho lanxa sezivuliwe wayencedisa elayibhurari. Kusukela ekuqedeni kwakhe isikolo eminyakeni emihlanu edlulileyo, ubengahlalanga ndawonye. Ubebhodabhoda edinga indawo ezawugculisa umoya wakhe. Uthi leyo ndawo useyithole kimi. Yikho lokhu okuhle ngoSimba. Wakhula engelani empilweni yakhe, okwenza ukuthi loba yini ayitholayo isuka ibeligugu.

Asehlukananga kangako. Sobabili sizintandane. Leliya langa ngikhuluma ngenotho emasimini, yilo engamcina ngalo ubaba. Wabhubha ngalenzonsuku. Angisakhumbuli kakuhle ukuthi kwenzakalani. Umama esezibona esele yedwa, laye waphanga wedlula. Kazange akacabange ukuthi thina bantwabakhe sizamfuna empilweni zethu. Sazithola sesikhuliswa ngubabakazi, udadewabo kababa. Kanje ngobani abatshona behlabela besithi ‘*indlu ayisilo khaya*’? Kanje bayaqhubeka bethi umuzi ngumuzi ngabantu? Angisayikhumbuli kuhle ingoma yakhona kodwa ngibona ingani itsho njalo. Mina kuyimi ngingathi ‘*indlu ayisuwu muzi nxa ingesiyakho*’. Siyavumelana kulokhu loSimba. Sesidiniwe yikuzula yonke indawo siziyenga ngokuthi lapho esifikele khona yilo ikhaya lethu. Lakhonapha ko Annette ayisiwo muzi wethu; ayisilo khaya lethu. Yindawo yokuqutha silindele ukuya lapho esiyakhona.

Wonke umuntu wayesixwayisa esithi singazihluphi ngokuphenduka ekhaya ngoba izinto zasezimbi ngamandla. Sasithumezela umnewethu imali yokuthi asakhele indlu. Wayephasalala athenge izitina lesamende, lakho konke okwakufuneka ekwakheni. Sasisenzela ukuthi sithi sesibuyela ekhaya kukhanye ukuthi sasesizamile empilweni. USimba wayengafuni seqise isikhathi esasisiphiwe ukuthi sihlale eLondon. Vele yena izinto ezingekho emthethweni kazithandi.

“Kuvele kuyini khonokhu ukuthi nxa sisiya emsebenzini sibe ngabanye abantu? Yona iyiphi lemisebenzi yakhona, etshiya umuntu engelasithunzi? Mina ngingumbalisi owaziyo umsebenzi wakhe, futhi ngiwuthanda. Wena uyi *Agro-Economist*. Kodwa khangela ukuthi senzani kulenkangala? Savumelana ukuthi asiyikuhlala isikhathi eside lapha. Angithi usakhumbula? Asizibuyelele ekhaya siyekhangelana labo ubunzima bakhona. Abanye bayabuyela.” Wayehlala ekhonona ngokuthi yena wayesediniwe yikutshona ekorobhana lamahlanzo ezidakwa. Phela wayesebenza okwakugcinwa khona izidakwa ezazizama ukuphusa utshwala. “Abelatshwa lokwelatshwa abantu bakhona. Bakhonapho nje ukwenzela ukuthi basuke ezitaladeni. Bahlezi pekle, ngiyakutshela!” Watsho ethukuthela uSimba. Sasingekho isikhathi sokuzonda okwedlula lapha ngoba sekumele aphange adlulele komunye wemisebenzi yakhe – owokufaka impahla emashelufini esitolo. Mina kwakuthi nxa izinto zihambe kuhle, ngike ngiyesebenzela esibhedlela esasiseduze lalapho esasihlala khona. Kwakungithatha imizuzu elitshumi ukuya khona ngenyawo. Kwakunzima lapha esibhedlela, umsebenzi wakhona usenyanyisa. Kwezinye insuku kwakusithi ngitshiye, kodwa umcabango wokubuyela ekhaya, ngiyehlala endlini ebiza mina lomkami, yiwo kuphela owawungipha amandla

okuqhubeka ngisebenza. Into engangiyazi ngiyiqonda yikuthi akulamuzi ongahlalwa ngabafazi ababili kulunge. Ukuhlala emzini wezihlobo zika Simba yinto engangingafuni lakuyicabanga.

Sekusele inyanga ezimbili kuma viza ethu ezethekeleli, savumelana ukuthi kwasekumele sisebenzele ugodo. Okuyisikhatshana kokukhuluma ngekusasa lethu sasikuthola phakathi laphakathi kokulungela ukwedlulela kweminye imisebenzi yethu. Loba sihlala ndlunye, sasesingasekho sona esokubonana. UAnnette wathembisa ukwengezelela kuleyo mali esasikhangelele ukuyithola.

“Angithi yimali nje? Lingazihluphi. Ngizasebenza enye.” Kwakukhanya kuyinqondo lokho. Ngalezonsuku, sasebenza sazigqili. Sasingasatholani lendlini. Ngitsho lokubonana. Sasesibona nje ngamathawulo amanzi, imiganu engagezwisanga, iphetshana elibhalwe lanamathiselwa efrijini omunye ecela ukuthi kuthengwe isinkwa, itshukela loba uchago. Amakha ayesetshenziswa nguAnnette yiwo ayebika ukuthi laye uke waba lapha endlini. Ngangithi ngingabona ilayithi elibomvu ku *VRC*, ngihle ngazi ukuthi nguSimba lowo – wayengafuni ukukhutha *iWeakest Link*. Ngangidana nxa ngibona ukuthi inqumbi yamakhasethi angabukelwanga yayilokhe ikhula. Kwasekunzima lapha; omunye lomunye ezama lokhu lalokhuya okungengeza imali yethu. Esibhedlela lalapho okuhlala khona abagugileyo, nginguAgnes. Endlini kwasweleka longangibiza ngelami ibizo. Ngaqala ukuzibiza ngalo nxa ngigeza, ngimi phambi kwesibuko. Ngithi lanxa ngizikhangele esibukweni kungathi ngikhangele umuntu ongayisimi. Kuthi lanxa ngizibiza kubenzima ukusabela ngoba umuntu osesibukweni engafani lengimaziyo.

Khathesi ngimi esinkini lapho okuhlala khona izalukazi lamaxhegu engiwasebenzelayo. Ngizibize nginyenyeza.

“Agnes, nceda s’thandwa. Ngicela ukhiphe ingcekeza esenziwe nguSebastian eholu. UTiffany ubhizi phezulu ngale, uMercy angimboni.” Ngethuke sengisizwa kukhulunywa lami. Ngizibuze ukuthi ngijame okwesikhati esinganani ngilahlekile emicabangweni yami, ngikhangele phandle ngewindi. Nanguya uBabette uthwele impahla eziyawatshwa emtshineni. USebastian mude, kodwa luswazi lomuntu nje. Lawe uyazibonela ukuthi kaphilanga. Amehlo asetshone phakathi. Uhamba kancane kancane okomnenke. Izikhathi ezinengi umthola emi mpo emakhoridweni ethule zwi. Ungathi ngumuntu ophanga akhohlwe ukuthi uthe esukuma phansi ubesiya ngaphi, esiyakwenzani. Umthole esejamile, elesithuli.

“Woza sihambe, Sebastian,” ngitsho ngimdonsa ngesineke, ngimsusa lapho asetshaye khona idamu lomchemo olithanga.

“Woza ngikutshintshe.” Ngokukhulumela phezulu ngizama ukuthi ngizwe ngcono kodwa namuhla, lami njengoSebastian, zithuthile. Kunzima ukuqhubekela phambili. Ngiyazihudula nje. Sekungathi impilo engiyibona ibuna kuSebastian isingene kowami umzimba yaba yiyo eyami.

Nxa kunje, ngibone uAnne Robinson ngenqondo yelihlo etshibilikisa *ilectern* yakhe engibuza esithi: “Ngipha ibala lesiLungu eliqala ngo ‘c’, elitsho ukwenzakala sikhathi sinye kwezinto.”

Namuhla ngezake ngithathe isikhathi eside ukupha impendulo eqondileyo kulowo mbuzo. Namhla ngizengatshayisana loSimba endlini ngemva kwenyanga lengxenywe. Ngiyiswele *ishift* esibhedlela, kuthi uSimba yena ubanjwe ngumvimbano, yikho engayanga emsebenzini. UAnnette yena uzama ukuthoba inhliziyi ephulwe lijaha ngokuxoxa lomunye wabangane bakhe efonini. Uzikhiyele ekamelweni lakhe. USimba yena uqethuke esofeni ubukele i*Weakest Link*. Uqamele emathangazini ami. Ngithabe-ke ukuthi ngihlezi laye, kuze kuthi ukukholisa kwakhe i*Weakest Link* kube engathi ngokwami. Uyazazi impendulo zemibuzo yakhona eminengi. Wehlulwa yile emayelana le ‘*UK Geography*’.

“Ngiyakutshela, abanye abadlali bangangivotela masinyane ukuthi ngiphume sebebona ukuthi ulwazi lwami lujule kulolwabo.” NguSimba lowo.

“Kodwa phela nxa bebona ukuthi ulolwazi, bayakugcina abanye.” Yimi lowo ngimupha ithemba.

“Akusebenzi njalo zikhathi zonke, *Babes*. Kwezinye izikhathi bayakuthelela, babone kungcono ukuthi wena okhaliphileyo ubengowokuqala ukuhamba lolwazi lwakho.”

Ngimphulule ikhanda ngibuye ngimange.

“Hatshi wena s’thandwa!” Yimi lowo; ngizwa ngikhudumala ngothando. Kwathi ngimdumele uSimba ngimngoqele engalweni zami ngimbambe nki, aze anamathelelani lami. Kwakungathi ilanga lakithi ekhaya lalike laphuma lathi kla. Hatshi leli elamaNgisi elitshisa engathi liyagula, liyadonda. Khatshana le engqodweni yami, ngizwe kunuka amaginqo. Amaginqo omuntu otshiswe lilanga elivuthayo, elingela zwelo. Anukelele kamnandi kimi lamaginqo omiswe lilanga. Ngizibone sengihlezi loSimba kweyethu idlu ekhaya, ngaloluhlobo. UTimmy wayesithumezela imifanekiso yendlu yethu. Yayisifike ebangeni lamawindi.

Kwasekusele abancintisani ababili emdlalweni *weWeakest Link*, sebefike kubanga elithiwa ‘wafa-wafa’. Abobothেকে uSimba ngalesisikhathi,

athathe iminwe yakhe ayelukele kweyami. Kwabasobala kimi ukuthi siyathandana, njalo sizijabulele.

Amemeze uAnnette esekamelweni lakhe lokulala. Uthi sidobhe ucingo lapho esikhona.

“Ngu Anti uSaru”, amemeze. Ufuna ukukhuluma lani.”

Kwasekusebusika njalo, singekulindele. Kwakungani ukhona ovule umnyango kwangena ungqwaqwane kaNhlolanja. Ngezwa ngamathambo ukuchobeka ukuthi zimbi indaba ngingakaludobhi lakuludobha ucingo. Lokhu ngabakwazi ngoba ukuphupha ilanga litshisa phakathi kobusika kuhlola okubi.

“Hello,” yimi lowo sengethukile.

Kwathatha isikhathi eside ukuthi kungene ayekutsho. Indaba yakhona ibhodabhoda, futhi inzima. Noma nje okunengi ngangingakukholwa futhi ngingakuzwisisi, engasengikuzwile kwangisanganisa ingqondo. Ngokuthula, ngayithatha ifoni ngayithi ngxi edlebeni kaSimba ukuthi azizwele okubikwayo. Phela kwakuzangehlula ukuthi ngimlandisele engangikuzwile. Kwakumele azizwele, hlawumbe yena wayezangilandisela ngcono. USimba kaphelwa ngamazwi phela. Usebenzisa aze asebenzise lala mabala thina abanye esawatshiya ngensuku sisesikolo – amancane esingela ndaba lawo, lamakhulu ehlula abanengi ekupeleli, kanye laphakathi laphakathi alemisindo ehambelana lokutshiwoyo. Kodwa ngalesosikhathi ngambona ebuyisela ifoni endaweni yayo, ethula zwi. Ngambona ebuna sahlamvu elikhithike esihlahleni latshiswa lilanga. Ngawubona usobela umoya wakhe, kwangani kasaphefumuli. Wahlikihla ubuso kodwa amadino amakhulu ayesemfikele alela ebusweni. Wayesetshotshobe. Mina ngasengiqanda mo, sekungathi kulenkakatha yesikhala esibetha umoya ngaphakathi kwami.

Sengimgezisile uSebastian, usezihlalele esihlalweni sakhe eceleni komlilo. Eholu sokuthanyeliwe kwahlikihlwa. USylvie ulele emethini endlini yokuhlala. Utshibilika ayele lale okophuphayo. Ingalo yanganxanye uyiphakamise yalenga ngaphezudlwana kwekhanda okomuntu ozothileyo. Ikhanda lalo ulilengisele emuva kancane, wacimeza. Ngiyabona nje ukuthi uzacina esesiesiyezi, kodwa angizihluphi ngokuthi ame ukutshibitshibilika kwakhe lokhu. Ngimekele. Amazinyo kaOlive aphezu kwetafula. Uhlafuna ibhisikiti ngensini. Akulandaba lokhu. Angitsho libhisikiti kuphela. Lizacina seliyisinampunampu eselimanzise ngamathe. UGloria yena uzihlalele laphaya, utshilatshila isifinyo sakhe esihle, esithandela eminweni. Kusobala ukuthi ukhatshana. Ngiyabona ucabanga leziya nsuku zakhe zokuzula lamazwe. UArnold yena uyazizulazulela okomuntu ongelahlupho emhlabeni.

Nango elalamela engibambabamba ingalo, qede angifcelele ilihlo. Ngidinwe kwaze kwathophela. Sekuze kungathi ngizahlala ngidiniwe. Ngibatshela ukuthi ngithole umbiko omubi ovela ekhaya. Ngomusa lozwelo abangitshengise khona, kube sobala ukuthi bacanga ukuthi ngilahlekelwe yisihlobo. Baze baziphatha kahle ukuze ngingabi lomsebenzi wokulandelana labo. Bengingakuchasisa njani ukuthi iphupho lami loSimba ebesiliphethe okwenyanga ezinhlanu, litshabalele, life lingagulanga? Yilo phela leliphupho elalisenza ukuthi mihla yonke ngivuke ngize kulendawo, ngibobotheka, ngibanceda kukho konke abakufunayo lababantu noma kwakungatsho. Kusiya ngami, ngalesosikhathi ngangifisa ukuba kithi le, ekhaya, ngizigqokele ikhowa lengwane yami, ngizulazula emasimini, ngigalule ngaphelela edakeni ngihlabe amagambhuthu. Ngizibone sengikhangele esibhakabhakeni ngicinga ukuthi lalizakuna yini, ngikhuleka njalo ukuthi kusamele line, lingasidanisi lonyaka.

“Lokhu kutsho ukuthi sesichithe inyanga ezinhlanu sisebenzela isizwe sika Khwini weNgilandi, ngokuthanda kwethu, kungelambadalo!”

“Sisihla endizamtshineni, besibuza ukuthi sizokwenzani, angithi ngasisazi, sasizaphendula sithi siyilaba abasebenza bengakhangelelanga kuhola, amavolontiya.”

Isithuli sithe sisithi dlwe, uSimba wayidobha irimothi ye TV wayifutha kabuhlungu yayatshayana lomduli. Waqala ukuhambahamba esiya le lale, ngapha ethuza okuyizintwana okusethebulini kusiwa phansi. Mina zwi esofeni ayengitshiye ngihlezi kulo.

“Usengenwe yini lo?” Wabuza uAnnette emi emnyango wekamelo lakhe.

“Ngumgodoyi ongumnewenu!” NguSimba lowo emkhomba ngomunwe uAnnette. Kungamhluphi lokhu uAnnette, ngoba phela yena eyi *‘rude-gyal.’*

“Hawu, usenzeni umnewethu?”

Kumehlule ukuphendula uSimba ngoba ephuphuma. Wathi tshibiliki watshitsha wangena ekamelweni lethu. UAnette wasehlala eceleni kwami.

“Isikhathi sonke lesi sisithi imipikitsha ayithumezayo ngeyendlu yethu, bekungamanga. Bekungeyendlu yomunye umuntu. Kathenganga lutho lokwakha ngemali yethu – akulasamende, akula zitina, akuqhatshwanga muntu ukuthi akhe, akulalutho.” Ilizwi lami laselizwakala engathi liphuma emlindini ngenxa yokudana. Ngangingasazi lokuthi engikutshoyo liqiniso kumbe ngiyaphupha nje.

“Uthini? UTimmy! Umgodoyi womuntu! Uzamani?” Atsho edumela ifoni uAnnette.

“Kuthiwa useleviki engabonakali. Kukhanya useSouth Africa.”

“Kanti lathi sasingenwe yini simethemba? Umpentsho womuntu! Ungenwe yini aze enze int’ enje?” Ekuthukutheleni kwakhe, usezewakhohlwa layindlela akhuluma ngayo njengabantu be-East End. Usekhuluma njengoAnnette engimaziyo engakasuki ekhaya. Okwesikhatshana nje ngazizwa sengingcono, sekungathi ngisekhaya.

Sekumele sibone ukuthi senzani. Sibophe okungokwethu sibuyele ekhaya, kumbe siqhubeke sisebenza lapha? UTimmy yi*Weakest Link*, thina lokhu sisamile! Inyathelo esizalithatha yilo elizakutsho ukuthi sizaphumelela kumbe sizawela phansi. Njengoba uSimba engazithandi izinto zesimenemene, ukuzonda kwakhe kuzaphelela kwelikhatshana. Mina, engikucabangayo, engikufunayo, lilanga kuphela.

Izigojwana zamatamatisi

John Eppel

Itiye yabathwa, kumbe *icatha edulis* yakuleli elakithi, ayilamandla afana lobhululu wayo otholakala ngasenyakatho yezwekazi leAfrica, okuthiwa yikhat. Nomakunjalo, ungathatha amahlamvu akhona esesemancane uwafake emanzini abilayo, kuphuma itiye evusa umzimba. Yikho nje amaNdebele eyibiza letiye esithi yinandinandi. ULofy Pienaar waxotshwa epulazini lakhe ngu Deputy Director wamaYouth Brigade. Wasesiba lozwelo lomuntu wasemekela ehlezi endlini yakhe uLofy, wabuye wamvumela lokusebenzisa amahekithe alitshumi. Ngemva kwalesosiga, wasedinga umbono kaTobias Banda, ufolomani walapha epulazini owayesesebenze koLofy iminyaka engamatshumi amabli. Ekuhlanganiseni kwabo amakhanda u Lofy wakubona kungcono ukuthi alime itiye yabathwa, ibe yiyo azayithengisa imphilise.

ULofy Pienaar wayefunde lami ebhodingi ngama 1960. Uyise wayesebenza emayini eyayithiwa Beta Asbestos, phandle kwedolobho leGwanda. Owami wayesebenza emayini yeLannenhurst Asbestos, phandle kweWest Nicholson. Sasifana-ke ekuthini amathuba okuthi obaba bethu bafe bebulawa lufuba olubangwa yi-asibhestazi, ayemakhulu. Ekuyeni lekuphendukeni kwethu esikolo sasigada isitimela. Wawuthola sesithe mbo ndawonye labanye abafundi basebhodingi kukhompsonimende yesitimela eyodwa. Kwakuyisitimela samalahle ngalezonsuku; sikhutshuza sikhafula intuthu ummango wonke sisuka koBulawayo sisiya ezansi kwelizwe, ngentshonalanga yayo. Sobabili sasithanda ezemvelo, ikakhulu izihlahla zeganga. AmaSonto wonke sasithi singaphuma ensontweni yesikolo, sithi phulukundlu siye kokuliganganyana okwakuphakathi laphakathi kwesikolo lenkundla yomjaho wamabhiza. Egangeni lapho sasithiya imbeba, sitshaye ngerekeni okuzinanyakazana, sibuye sitshontshe amaqanda enyoni ezidlekeni. Sasiwabuthelala amaqanda, aze abemanenganyana sibili. Imbeba sasizihlinza, sigcine izikhumba zakhona, kuthi sezinengi (amakhulu ambalwa), sithunge ixaba. Izikhunjana zembeba sasizomisa ngesawudo lamagadlagadla. Isawudo leli sasilisebenzisa njalo ukutswaya inyoni

esasizitshaya ngerekeni. Sasizicutha, sikhuphe ezangaphakathi sizose ngokuyimlilwanyana esasikufihla.

Ngomunye umnyaka ngake ngachitha ikhefu lokuvalwa kwezikolo ngikoLofty, laye wenza njalo ngesinye isikhathi – wazoqeda ikhefu lesikolo ngakithi. Abako Pienaar – umama, ubaba, okuJohann loLofty – babehlala endlini engajayelekanga. Kwakuyinkalakatha yekamelo eliqunywe ngamakhetheni kathathu ukuthi kubelamakamelo amancane amathathu: kwakulelokulala elabafana, elokulala elabadala, lelinye okwakuhlalwa kubuye kudlelwe khona. Ikhitshi lendlwana yokugezela, kwakubucwadlana kwesinye isakhiwo. Imiduli yendlu yakoLofty kwakungamasaka agcwele amalahle, elekaniswa asethungwa ngocingo ehlanganiswa. Amasaka ayebethelelwe ezigodweni zama *gumtree* ezazifakwe umuthi ukuthi zingaphehlwa kumbe ukudliwa ngumuhlwa. Ayependwe apendwa ngekalaka amasaka akhona. Walindela ilanga elilomoya ovunguzayo uLofty ukungitshengisa ukuthi indlu yangakibo yayiphephezela. Yayifulelwe ngotshani obabusekelwe zintungo ezincane eze*gumtree*, kwasekufakwa ucingo phezu kotshani lezigodo.

Beqala ukuhlala endlini yabo abakoPienaar, kwakungela manzi aphuma empompini. Wasecela imvumo uyise kaLofty ukuthi afake impompi ezihamba phansi zisuka lapho okusetshenzwa khona i-asibhestazi zisiya ekhitshini lakhe elalifulelwe ngamazenge. Ikhitshi lakhona kwakuphonguba ngokuyindlwana nje okungaqondakaliyo. Wasesakha igiza, eceleni kwayo wasefaka ishawa eyayiphosa ibesegekeni. Kwesinye isikhathi amanzi eshawa ayetshisa kakhulu; kwesinye eqanda mo – kusala ukuthi akhudumale okulingeneyo.

Ithoyilethi yabo kwakungeyomgodi, ikhatshana kulendlu njalo kusesabisa ukuya khona ebusuku ngenxa yenyoka, inkume lokunye okusankume owawungatshayisana lakho. Lasemini kwakusesabisa ukuya ethoyilethi ngoba wawungatshayisana lenkomo isihwatsha utshani okufulelwe ngabo ithoyilethi, isidla.

Sasikholisa nxa sikukhefu ngakoLofty. Ngangikholisa ukuzingela kwethu egangeni loba nje izihlahla lotshani kwakuthe gqa gqa ngenxa yobumunyu benhlabathi. Kodwa kwakumnandi ukuzwa amakilogo amadonki engendeza, lomnuko womvalasangwana.

Langakithi sasikholisa. Indlu yethu yayiphezulu koqaka phandle kweWest Nicholson. Sasingelamanzi aphuma empompini kodwa sasilenkalakatha yetanka eyayakhiwe ngesamende, iphosa ukulingana lendlu ubukhulu. Yiyo eyayigola amanzi izulu lingana. Isikhathi sethu esinengi sasisichitha sidlala khonapho etankeni le eyayigcwele amaxoxo lobulembu obuluhlaza. Kulapho esafundela khona ukubhhukutsha, mina lodadewethu.

Amanzi akhona yiwo futhi umama ayethelela ngawo ingadi. ULofty ngamtshengisa okuyizigojwana kwesihlahla somsinsi okwakufole kwathi thwitshi, kufakelwe ukumisa amatamatisi. Zasezimila izigojwana lezi. Kwakusithi ngemva kwesikhathi umama aphundle amaxhakela ayesehluma ukwenzela ukuthi isihlahla lesi singacini sibulala amatamatisi. Ngenye ikuseni samncedisa umama ukuzalisa amatamatisi ngokuthintithela impoko zamapopo emafulawuzini amatamatisi. Wayekholwa umama ukuthi lokhu kwakuzakwenza amatamatisi abemakhulu njalo abe lomhluzi omnengi. Langakhona, amatamatisi akhe ayethiwa yi 'ox heart,' ayemahle okumangalisayo.

Amanzi okusebenzisa endlini ayelethwa yirolu yemayini nsukuzonke ntambama. Sasiwakhupha kudiramun enkulu siwathela ezinkonxeni lezinye nje izinto ezazingacina amanzi. Okukhulu kwalezi zinto zokugcina amanzi kwakuyinkalakatha yebhavu yezenge. Esikhathini esinengi, owayegeza kuqala ngubaba. Njengoba wayengcola kakhulu emsebenzini, amanzi ayegeze ngawo ayesala elengcekeza endendayo. Owayelandela ubaba ekugezeni ngumama, kuze udadewethu, kucine mina. Nxa uLofty esivakatshale, nguye owayegeza kuqala, ngamanzi angela ngecekeza.

Eyethu indlu yayingaphephezeli njengeyako Pienaar kodwa yayilomsindo wensimbi ikhuhlana lezitina. Mina loLofty sasilala evurandini. Ukuxotsha imiyane sasitshisa i-oyili ye *citronela*. Sasihlahla amehlo singabona omalulwane bengena bephuma lapho esilele khona ngoba umbalisi wethu wayeke wasifundela indaba ka Count Dracula eyiqephune ebhukwini lika Bram Stoker. Ukuthi singalunywa ngamadrakula, seluka amaneklesi egalikhi salala siwagqokile, sabuye sabaza izigojwana salala sizithukuze ngaphansi kwemiqamelo. Udadewethu wala ukuseboleka isiphambano sakhe sesiliva. Sathi ngaphi? Sathatha izipunu, lamafokhu lengqamu, sazenzela ezethu iziphambano.

Indlela engena ngakithi yayiqansile. Yaba yiyo kanye into esiyidingayo ekutsheleleni ngokuzinqodlana esasikubumba sisebenzisa amaviri amabhasikili abantwana lawama phurema. Umama wasithungela iflegi esebenzisa izichibi zezigqoko zangaphakathi ezindala. Amehlo kadewethu ayengasasuki kuLofty. Yena-ke udadewethu wayengadinwa ngokusihlanganisela iKipto (impuphu etshiphileyo eyayihlabusa sa-orenji) le phawuda yekhokho letshukela. Abesethela amanzi sitshone siwanatha lamanzi amnandi.

Ngelinye ilanga saya emdansweni wantambama eklabhu yeColeen Bawn, sahlangu labangane bethu besikolo abafana loFred Simpson lo Andy Visagie. Sachitha amahora lamahora siseqa ku*trampoline* eceleni kwechibi lokubhukutsha. Sathi sesidiniwe ngokudlala sayatshontsha izithelo

engadini yako Philips. Sakhetha ukuya ko Philips ngezizatho ezimbili: izinja zabo zazingalumi njalo belamagirebusi amnandi. Ngubani ongafuna ukutshontsha amatorofiya lamagwava yena engathola amagirebusi? Sakhohlwa ukuthi umdala Phineas owayesuka eMalawi njalo ephekela oPhilips, wayelala kancane hatshi obukaBhuka ngoba esesaba ukuloywa ngontokolotsha ebusuku. Sithe amayembe sesiwagcwalise ngamagirebusi, thutshu uPhineas ephuma exhibeni lakhe ezungeza induku. UFred lo Andy babaleka baqonda ngakwelinye icele, mina lo Lofty saqonda kwelinye, sihamba silahla amagirebusi. Wasixotshanisa umdala ememeza, “Amatsotsi! Amatsotsi!”

“Thina hayikhona tshontsha! Thina hayikhona tshontsha!” Waklabalala uLofty ngokwethuka okukhulu. Aluba wayemutsha uPhineas, wayezasibamba, athi angasibamba asiklwebhe ngoswazi. Kwakuyizikhathi ezimnandi lezo. ULofty lodadewethu bathandana okweminyaka ethize. Behlukana ngoba udadewethu esekhetha ukuzalwa kakutsha kuKhrestu, esegeze ngegazi lika Jesu, uLofty yena wala ebambelele kuDutch Reformed yangakibo.

Sithe siqeda isikolo sehlukana. Mina ngangena ku*social work*, uLofty wabangumlimi. Wayekufundele ukulima ekoliji yeGwebi, eduze leHarare. Uthe esengumsekeli kafolomane kwelinye ipulazi okwakulinywa khona igwayi kwenye indawo yeMashonaland, wabizwa ku *call-up*. Lami ngabizwa ku*call-up*, njengaye wonke owesilisa omhlophe owayephakathi kweminyaka engamatshumi lasificaminwe mibili lamatshumi ayisithupha. Umsebenzi wethu wawungowokugcina ibandla le Rhodesian Front lisesihlalweni sombuso. Ngalezo nsuku ze*call-up*, ngahlangana loLofty eVila Salazar emngceleni weMozambique. Sobabili sasifakwe kuSixth Batallion silesicoco esithiwa “*B grade riflemen*,” okwakusitsho ukuthi sasitshona sigezwa amagodi ezambuzi lawokucatshela izitha. Ilanga uLofty aze angitshale ngesifiso sakhe sokuba lepulazi sawajelwa kwathiwa asithule. Lilanga sicathamela isitha egangeni lePhakhi yesizwe, iGonarezhou.

Isifiso sikaLofty esokuba ngumninipulazi safezeka ngemva kokutholakala kukazibuse hatshi ngesikhathi sempi. Ukusuka kwabelungu abanengi bebaleka, kwatsho ukuthi abasalayo babewathenga etshiphe imihlolo amapulazi athengiswayo. Encediswa ngabazali bakhe lomnewabo owayeseAmerica, uLofty wenelisa ukubhadala ingxenye yemali eyayifuneka ekubambiseni ipulazi. Lalingama hekithe ayi 350, livundile, liseduze lomfula Umguza, liseduze ledolobho lakoBulawayo ukwenzela ukuthi alime imbhida, amakhabitshi, amatamatisi lokunye ayengenisa emkambo koBulawayo. Isinqumo esasibekiwe ekuthengeni kwakhe ipulazi kwaba

yikuthi agcine izisebenzi ezingamatshumi amabili ezazisebenza lapho zihlala lemuli yazo enkomponi. Umkhokheli waleliqembu lezisebenzi wayengumlimisi omkhulu, uTobias Banda owayebizwa ethiwa Baba.

Uthe eyithola incwadi eyayivela kuHulumende omutsha ibika ukuthi uHulumende wayengalifuni lelo pulazi ayelithenga, wahle waqala ukusebenza uLofty. Izisebenzi zakhe zazithembekile, zisebenza gadalala. Waguqula indawo eyayingeyokuvakatsha ngempelaviki abantu sebedakwe yisiphithiphithi sedolobheni (umninipulazi owathengisela uLofty wayengudokotela olendawo yakhe yokwelaphela edolobheni). Wayiguqula lendawo uLofty yaba lipulazi kuzwa. Khonokho nje wayesethengisela iBulawayo kanye lelizwe lonke ulaza olwaluphuma enkomeni zakhe zochago, lazo zingengaki. Wayeselemivundla ethiwa yiAngora, eyayigelwa kuphume iwulu enhle. Engadini kwakuphuma igalikhi, amatamatisi, ilethisi, amagwili lokunye okunjalo. Kazange ame khonapho. Wayengenisa uluju, amajeli ayewenza ngezithelo zeganga ezifana lamaganu, isagogwane lomqokolo. Uthe eqala ukomisa abesethengisa ingaphakathi yamaluba omlahleni, wahle wabangomunye wabalutshwane abathengisela umhlaba wonke ingxenye yalesisihlahla eyayifunwa ngabantu kakhulu.

Ngokuya kweminyaka wahluba uLofty wabangumlimi ophumeleleyo, elazo lezinto ezazihamba lalokho kuphumelela: iMercedes Benz, indlu eyisikepe eKariba, unkosikazi labantwana abane, isihlalo kubhodi yezinye zezikolo ezazihlonitshwa. Kwakuthi kanye ngomnyaka sihlangeane, ikakhulu ngePhasika, sidle imihwabha sinathe lotshwala sixoxe ngensuku zethu zokudubeka. Sisalibele kwaqala ukuthathwa kwamapulazi, okwakuthiwa yi*Third Chimurenga*. Abokuqala ukungena emapulazini ngababesempini, amawoveti, labontanga ababengasebenzi. Badlisa luklubhu izisebenzi zikaLofty besithi zingabathengisi, babethusela ngokubaquma intamo. Abangena epulazini likaLofty okokuqala babehlala bedakwe butshawala kumbe imbanje. Babethwala amahloka lenduku, batshaye amagabha lezivalo zamabhimu, bememeza izilogani, behlabela lengoma zenkululeko.

Kuthe kufika ixuku lesibili epulazini lika Lofty, phakathi kwezisebenzi zakhe kwasekusele ixhegu elinguTobias Banda kuphela. Inkomponi yayisitshisiwe kwasala kungela yonandlu eyodwa emileyo. Inengi lezisebenzi zazihlohlwe emarolini zalahlelwa eceleni komgwaqo oqonda eFolosi. IXuku lesibili ukungena epulazini kwakungamapholisa ayethwele imibhobho, eqhatshwe nguDeputy Director wamaYoth Brigade. Wayelawo amapholisa, ephethe ezungeza esandleni incwadi eyayivela komunye umkhulu kugatsha lwezokulima. Incwadi le yamimupha ilungelo lokuthi athathe ipulazi likaLofty. AbakoPienaar baphiwa amahora angamatshumi amabili lane ukuthi baphume baphele epulazini nxa

bengafuni ukubotshwa. Kodwa uthe ngokubhodabhoda phakathi endlini, uDeputy Director wamaYouth Brigade wathola ukuthi indawo okuhlonywa khona amapulagi zazingenelisi amakhompiyutha endodakazi yakhe, *iplay station* yendodana yakhe, iDVD yomkakhe, sesingasatsho amathelevizhini amathathu ababelawo. Ngaleyondlela wabalomusa wamvumela uLofty ukuhlala endlini – okwaleso sikhathi – kanye lokusebenzisa ama hekithe alitshumi.

Ababeqale ukuzohlala ngenkani epulazini, basebekhuphe izilimo zonke zikaLofty bafaka umumbu (ukhona owayesetshontshe isithuthuthu esasipompa amanzi okuthelela). Babeqine ngokuthengisa inkuni lenyama yenyamazana zeganga ababezithiya epulazini, beyitshaya imali. Bathe bebona amapholisa bajabula bethi azobasekela kulokhu abakwenzayo. Kuze kufike leso sibanga, uLofty wayeme ngokubapha inkomo yochago kanye ngenyanga, ukuthi badle. Bonke babesithi bangamawoveti, kodwa kwakulexekana elalikhanya ukuthi babezinhansi emehlweni zabonina ekuthathweni kwelizwe. Ngelanga lokuza kwamapholisa babengabuzanga elangeni. Imiphongolo yemibhobho eyayikhombele abakoPienaar yaphenduka yavulela bona amehlo. Bamangala, bakhonona, kungelamasiza. Batshelwa ukuthi baphume baphele khonokho-khonokho. Nanko lamapholisa edubula phezulu etshengisela ukuthi uDeputy Director wayengadlali. Injalo impilo; yisiphansi-phezulu.

Amahlamvu lamaxolo *ecatha edulis* alomuthi opha umzimba umdlandla wokwenza okutshiyeneyo. AmaBhunu aseMzansi, la aziwa ngembali yokuhamba bedabula izwe lonke, babewasebenzisa amaxolo lamahlamvu esihlahlana lesi ukwelapha izifo zesifuba lophepha. Longumuthi amaBhunu ayebone usetshenziswa ngabeNsundu baseMzansi Africa. Abantwana baka Lofty, bonke bobane, bake babanjwa yikukhwehlela. Bekhwehlela hatshi okokudlala, bengathi bayakhonkotha. UTobias Banda wabelapha ngokubafuthisa ngentuthu yenandinandi. Wayesazi umdala Banda ukuthi isihlahlana lesi esitshona siluhlaza umnyaka wonke, esilengatsha ezilengele phansi lamahlamvu amahle angamavinqovinqo emaceleni, sitholakala ngaphi. Wangena iganga loLofty babhudula ezindaweni zemsasa, emaqaqeni lasemakhaya aseduze lako Bulawayo baphuma lentanga zenandinandi abazihlanyela inye ngayinye emigodleni yamaplastiki amnyama. ULofty wasedinga olunye ulwazi ngalesisihlahla wathola ukuthi isivuno sokuqala sasizakuba ngemva kweminyaka eyisikhombisa kusiya kweyisitshiyagalombili. Esalindele lokho, waqala ukuthengisa impahla yonke ayelayo, ukuthi kudliwe emzini wakhe labantwana baye esikolo.

Ngemva kweminyaka emihlanu, izihlahla zikaLofty zasezikhule kahle, zibukeka. Zazikhule ziqondile, zimpofana, amhlamvu eluhlaza tshoko ekhazimula okwe*blue gum* yaseAustralia. ULofty loTobias basebakhe okuyindlwana lapho ababezakomisela khona amahlamvu enandinandi. Indlwana le yayifana laleziya uLofty ake wazakha ngezinsuku esebenza epulazini legwayi. Injongo yabo kwakuyikuthengisa amahlamvu omileyo kanye laluhlaza. Kusenjalo, amahekithe lawana ayi 340, aka Deputy Director, ayeseligceke – ngitsho isihlahla esisodwa owawungasibona; ngitsho okuyisihlahlanyana. Zonke izihlahla zaseziganyuliwe kwathengiswa inkuni. Wasecabanga ukuthi enye imali yayizavela ngaphi. Alime amatamatisi? Yebo. Wawalima. Kodwa izigojwana zokumisa amatamatisi zathi uzangithola nga? Angithi kuphela kwezigodo ezasezisele ngakucele likaDeputy Director kwakuyilezi ezazilocingo lokuchaya impahla. Wasebiza laba abekade begamula izihlahla. Ekhangele izihlahla zika Lofty, wabatshele abagamuli ukuthi ufuna izigojwana zokumisa amatamatisi njalo wayezabhadala i*5cents* sigojwana sinye esizaletswa kowakhe umnyango. Ngemva kwamahora athize wazithola eselenkulungwane yezigojwana zamamatamatisi. Kwaba yikutshabalala kukaLofty Pienaar.

Mhla ezibophela kumgqala wekhonkiri owawuphambi kwendlu, kwaba yilo ilanga okwatholakala ngalo uTobias Banda ebulewe exhibeni lakhe, esikiwe esifubeni kwabhalwa ibala elithi BLANTYRE. Amawoveti ayeseiphendukile, sebehamba labanye abaphume ebuthweni lesizwe okungekho emthethweni. Babephethe amaAK47, abanye bedlalidlalisa amagrinedi alamaphini arusileyo. Besaxokozela kanjalo, nanso inkalakatha ye Toyota Land Cruiser Prado VX Turbo Diesel 4x4 eyisiliva ibongolela ngoba ifakwe egiyeni lesibili kokuphela, ilensimbi phambili lakho konke okwenza imota ibemnandi phakathi – mp3, amawindi akhwezwa ehliswe ngegetsi, ama *air bag* kunye lendawo yokubeka igabha lekhokhokhola. (Asisoze silitsho ibizo lomtshayeli kodwa esingakutsho yikuthi uhlala kunkalakatha ye‘small house’ koBulawayo, eyakhiwe kulandelwa ukwakha kwamaTaliyana okuthiwa *Tuscan*. Indlu le ilamakamelo okulala angamatshumi amathathu. Linye ngalinye ikamelo lilethoyilethi lendawo yokugezela. Okunye engingakutshela khona yikuthi kanye ngenyanga uphapha aye eDubai ukuyakhithiza izigqoko, izikhwama zabomama, izicathulo kunye le*Kentucky Fried Chicken* lamachips letomato sosi).

Wayebaqhatshile laba asebetshaya itoyitoyi, ukuthi badudule uDeputy Director wama Youth Brigade epulazini. Ingalo yayigcwele amasongo, iminwe iqatha engathi ivuvukile. Yiyo leminwe eyayizungeza incwadi eyayilesidindo sogatsha lukaHulumunde olulamandla ukwedlula zonke ingatsha. Ipulazi wayelifunela udadewabo omcane. Wayesetholele

abanewabo ababili, omalume labobabakazi bakhe bonke abaphilayo lezithandwa zakhe ayezifihla. Ngendlela izinto ezazimi ngayo, ingxenye yeMatabeleland yonke kwasekungeyakhe – okwaleso sikhathi. Konke lapho ayethi ngokwakhe kwasekungasela zihlahla.

Imuli kaLofty yacina ngani? Beza bazohlala ngakwami. Okwakhathesi siphakathi kokuzama ukuthi siyehlala eNew Zealand lapho okufuneka khona ama*social worker*. UPam ngumongikazi olesithupha salowo msebenzi, kasoze athwale nzima ukuthola umsebenzi. Ukuzibophela kuka Lofty lokubulawa kabuhlungu kukaTobias kwaphambanisa abantwana, ikakhulu icinathunjana elinguTheuns, yena owazalwa sekulemimyaka eminengi uLofty lomkakhe bacina ukuba lomntwana. Bebesiya kukhanselingi kwenye iNGO edumileyo. Asazi ukuthi kuzozalwa nkomoni. Mina ke kuyangisinda ukutshiya ilizwe lami lokuzalwa. Ngiyisizukulwane sesine sabelungu balapha eAfrica. ULofty yena singatsho sithi ubengumlungu-mAfrika okweminyaka engu 350. Manje? Bangabuza abanye. Sesimise ukuthi sizahaza umlotha wakhe mhla welanga elilomoya, ilanga elalingenza indlu yangakibo iphephezele.

Isidingo

Sandisile Tshuma

“Udubo luzala imiphefumulo eqiniliyo, njalo iqhawwe likhanya ngamanxeba.”- Kahlil Gibran

Emhlabeni wabaphilayo, ngitsho lowamathonga, lokhe ngababala ngathwetshulwa yingwe – sengize ngileminyaka engamatshumi amathathu lane, ngiyafunga ngithi angikaze ngimbone umfazi omuhle kanje. Uyikofi equngwe ngolaza lwazwela. Ikaphatshino engiyinatha ngamehlo ngikholwe ngingakholwa. Inwele zakhe zimnyama bhuqe, ziphothene zathi ukudonswa zalaliswa phambili, zekelwa emuva zatshakaza. Amehlo akhe ayiziziba engithi ngikhangela kuzo ngizizwe sengigalula, zingidonsela phakathi kwenziki yenkanuko. Amehlo akhe angithatha angise khatshana, kweminye imihlaba engingakaze ngiyifike, engingasozwe ngiyifike. Nangu, lanxa ebobotheka ekhuluma lami, angimuzwa ngoba ngilokhu ngicwile emehlweni akhe, ingqondo yami isimi ndawonye. Kuzothi wena ntshantshu yokukhombisa uyithenge indaba ngokumtshela losisi ukuthi lawe uya eGermiston njengaye. Usebenza khona na? Hatshi, kasebenzi khona kodwa uya ku*interview* ngo nayini. Angawuthola umsebenzi lo sesizabambisana indlela zikhathi zonke kwelizayo. Umduduze ngokuthi uzawuthola lomsebenzi. Ngubani sibili ophелеleyo ekhanda ongekela ukumqhatsha yena emm... emm... ekhaliphile kanje. Abobotheke esizwa lokhu umtanabantu. Lelanga liphuma lisala phansi.

Ngilibukele liqhubekela phambili ngengxoxo, ngithe khoxo phakathi kwenu. Amathe asetshile kimi. Ngifise ngamandla ukuthi amaphaphu abuyele endaweni yawo. Sengicwile nya emehlweni entombi. Wena ungoweMamelodi, yena ngoweEritrea kodwa uhlala lomnewabo eBruma. Akhangele phansi esekhuluma ngokuhlala kwakhe lomnewabo eBruma ngoba esebona amehlo akho esithi lwazi, lokuthi ukumbuka obekusenziwa ngabantu lapha emtshoveni sekuphange kwahloba. Sonke lesisikhathi, amehlo akhe athe mbe, kimi. Ngifikelwe yikufuna ukumduduzwa, ngimtshele ukuthi angesabi, kayedwa; lami angisiwalapha. Nanko ngithatheka,

ngimtshela ukuthi kuhle kakhulu ukuba ngabantu bokuza lapha eGoli, lokuthi kungijabulisa kakhulu ukuhlanguka lelinye *ikwerekwere*. Ngitsho lokuthi ngokuya kwesikhathi, thina *amakwerekwere* sizakuya sisanda size sedlule abanikazi beSouth Africa, ikakhulu eJohannesburg. Ngihlekele phezu kakhulu, ngithi jeqe kuwe ngithi mhlawumbe uzakwengeza kulokhu engikutshoyo kumbe uhleke lawe, ngithole ungikhangele ngelengulube, elitshaqisa igazi. Kusobala ukuthi sengiphambanisile. “*Nxa!*” Ngithi kumbe ngizwile onxaphileyo, ngizwe omunye ngemva kwami esithi ‘*Lomuntu uyasinyatsa.*’ Wena usuthukuthele. Ngicabange ukuthi kuqala kanje. Phela kulamahungahunga athi abantu bokuza bahlaselwa kabuhlungu yilaba abayinzalo yalapha eSouth Africa – emalokitshini, emapulazini lakwezinye indawo. Noma singabangane, ngihle ngizibonele ukuthi sengikuhlokozile. Ngiyazi ukuthi uyindoda elukhuni, lokuthi lapha ozonda khona uyaphuphuma. Awuqalwa ngoba ubuzima bempilo osubuthwele impilo yakho yonke benza ulavuke ngolaka. Ngiyazi futhi ukuthi empilweni yakho ubudoda ubuveza ngobudlwangudlwangu. Yikho oziqhenya ngakho. Kuwe, ukucitsha umphefumulo yinto elula nje; awukwesabi. Sekuthule cwaka lapha emtshoveni. Sengize ngizizwa ngiphefumulela phezu. Kuqande mo, kimi. Uyayazi lindaba. Wayibona isenzakala kuleya minyaka emibili edluleyo.

Angikafuni ukufa mina, ngakho-ke ungangenwa ngumoya wokungibulala, ngizabaleka. Ngizadabula phakathi kwelokitshi ngigxabhaze emanzini ezititshi zekaka, ngedlule okungabantwana okulengise amakhovula kupatula ngenyawo phansi; ngitsho abantwana abancane abangaboniyo ukuthi umkhathi usutshintshile – kulomuntu ozabulawa. Ngizabaleka. Uzathi ukungisekela ngejubane, ngapha ungithuka ngenkalakatha zenhlamba ezigcwele inzondo lomona; mina *kwerekwere*, umfowenu ongasimntaka nyoko, ngizapuntshuka emkhukhwini wami osuthe ukuwulumathisa; ngithele ngejubane. Kuzakuthi lalapho uThabo, uJohn, uTshepo, loMandla labo sebekuncedisa ekungixotshaniseni njengezinja ezichithisiweyo, ngizaphelelwa, kungiqede amandla ukuthi sonke lesi sikhathi laba bantu bebezimpisi ezembethe izikhumba zezimvu, mina ngiziyenga ngisithi ngabangane, hatshi omakhelwane nje!

Kodwa yini le? Kutshoni? Akutsho lutho kuwe ukuthi mihla yonke besivuka ekuseni, silayinele imitshova sonke, sinatha sonke endaweni yethu leya esingafuni yaziwe muntu, siphikisana ngokuthi Amakhosi kumbe AmaBuccaneer yiwo ayezanqoba kumdlalo omkhulu wamathimu aphuma eSoweto? Inyawo zami zizathi ziquphula uthuli, amehlo ami awazukubona indlela engijima kuyo. Azabona uhambo lwethu izolo, mina lawe, lawe,

lawe, sivela emsebenzini sidinwe sifile. Sivela edolobheni elasithembisa igolide, kwathi endaweni yalelo golide, idolobho lasidla ubuntu bethu.

Ngizathi ngidlula ngiyisivunguzane espaza sikaLulu, lapho engithenge khona umentshisi wokulayitha ilayithi lami lepharafini ngaleliya langa, ngibe lethemba lokuthi mhlawumbe, njengoba elomusa lozwelo, angangivikela kulokhu kuhlanya kwakho, athi angakutshela ukuthi usuhlanya, lawe uzibambe. Uphuphuma impilo uLulu! Wonke umuntu uyambuka ngoba phela eyikho konke ongakudinga emuntwini olinina – inina lesintwini uqobo. Phela okweminyakaleminyaka wayekumele wakubhensela ukubhulwa ngumkakhe owayeyinkalakatha yesidakwa. Wayengatshaywa, wayebulawa! Uchuku lomkakhe lwalusegcekeni. Wayedinda adinde umfazi okhanyela yiloba ngubani ukuthi ulothando, uzothile, ubuthakathaka. Ukubhulwa kukaLulu nsukuzonke, kwenza inhliziyo zabomakhelwane zopha. Imithandazo yethu busuku bonke yaba ngaye lapho sicabanga indlela ayexolisa ngayo lanxa engonanga, ecela uxolo, evuma lezono angazenzanga. Kwakusihlaba enhliziyweni, besesikubikela uMlimu, laye esasithandabuza ukuthi ukhona; kodwa sibike ngoba sisithi mhlawumbe abekhona. Kambe wayekhona sibili uNkulunkulu esekela isidalwa sakhe sihawula kangaka, engasafaki isandla sakhe somusa, aluqede loludubo? Yayingekho idlela yokuthi lubaba axole. Wayemdutshuza amdaklaze uLulu aze amekele eseqalekile. “*Nanko-ke!*” Wayethanda ukutsho njalo, “*Sengimbulele umthakathi!*” Eqeda lapho, wayedayeka ngokudakwa, athubele emnyameni wasemathathakusa. Wawungasoze umuzwe etshela umuntu ngokuhlukuluzwa lokubhulwa kwakhe lokhu uLulu. Wayevuka ekuseni ebobotheka, aqonde kokuyisitodlwana kwakhe okwakhiwe ngamazenge, engathi akula lutho olwenzakeleyo. Kwakusasipho esiyimfihlo njalo esiligugu kuye. Kwathi lalapho esifa kabuhlungu umkakhe, uLulu kazangange atshengise kuthaba loba ukudana. Wafa egwazwa ngengqamu eshabhini lapho ayethanda ukunathela khona. Kukhanya wayekhona ayeqalane laye kwalwiwa kabuhlungu. Watholakala emgelweni, ophe waze wafa. ULulu wamane wayingcwaba linyamazana yomuntu ngokuthula, qede lapho waqoqa abantwabakhe wabuyela esitodlwane sakhe, lapho ayethola khona ukuthula emoyeni wakhe. *Uyakwazi ukupenda?* Wangibuza ngelinye ilanga. *Ngifuna ungibhalele okunye lapha.* Watsho engiqhubela *isibhuratsho* sokupenda esasithonta ipenda, etsho lokuthi wayefuna ngibhale ngithini. Yilo lelilanga yonke imfihlo yakhe eligugu ayiveza sobala kuyewonke umuntu, ngependa ebomvu. ‘*Wathint’ umfazi, wathint’ imbokodo.*’

Imbokodo le yomfazi, ethanda ukuthi ingangibona ibobotheke, njalo yandise ukungikweleda amagwinya ayo amnandi futhi akhudumalayo, wona ayiwo abamba umphefumulo wami ngezikhathi zendlala - namuhla lo mfazi

kayikungithabela. Namuhla kayikungibona njengekhastoma ethembekileyo, ekade imnceda ngokuthenga espaza sakhe ngesikhathi izinto zingamhambeli kuhle. Uzalukhohlwa lonke udubo lwakhe, lokuhlukuluzwa kwakhe, engeze olwami. Nguye ozathi ngivele ngisesihogweni akhwezele umlilo. Kayikusebenzisa ukuhlonitshwa kwakhe ukwenqabela abantu asebevuke ubhova ekufuneni ukungibulala. Hatshi! Uzakhetha khona kanye ukungiqunga ngepharafini eqolo ngezandla zakhe ebengithi ngezobelo besifazane. Kuzakuthi lapho usungihitsha umnuko wepharafini, ngiyizwa itshelela emzimbeni wami, igeleza ngomzimba, ngizazibuza: “*Kanti, ngifelani?*”

Ngemva kwami, esandleni sokudla, uPhilip J., ixhegu lase Malawi elingumkhulu waboweta kwenye ihotela, uzawuhlaba awulawule umkhosi gesakibo. Umkhosi wakhe uzahlasimulisa umzimba wami. Njengoba wazalwa eyisacuthe, uzaphaphatheka engakwazi ukuthi wazingelwa nje, sekutheni. Kuzakubanzima kuye ukuzwisisa lokhu ngoba kazikusithola isikhathi sokutshibilika azame ukubona ukuthi indebe zalaba abamxotshanisayo zibumba mabala bani ngoba bemhlezi ngemuva, bemthuka. Noma kunjalo, uPhilip J. ulesiphiwo sokuzwa ngomzimba. Yonke into uyizwa ngomzimba. Engakahlaselwa, uezwa nje emzimbeni ukuthi kuza inkalakatha yesihluku. Uzahle ahlabe umkhosi esezwile ubuhlungu obungakenzakali, obethaya lemota elibhebhayo, elizaphoswa ngenye indoda imgqokisa entanyeni. Usezwile lobuhlungu bokutsha ekhanda lokuhitshwa yintuthu aze ehluleke ukuphefumula. Afe ngaleyo ndlela, esezidelile lokuzidela esebone ukuthi akulamasiza. Kunini elwisana lempilo? Wanqoba zonke izinto ezazisenza impilo yakhe ibenzima kusukela amazwe angezansi kweAfrica ethola uzibuse. Wasuka kibo, ekhalweni lwezintaba okuthiwa yiMulenje, khonale eMalawi, waze wazokuthi gulukudu lapha endaweni yegolide, lapho asebenza khona eside isikhathi. Usebenze lamadoda labafazi abalomona lochuku, ababemenza isichibi nje sokwesula phansi. Kodwa bonke laba bantu bacina sebemthanda. Sewabaxolela futhi wakhohlwa iziga zabo zokumlulazisa. Njengomuntu omdala, wayengelaso isikhathi sokudlalisa, elwisana lento enje.

Ngomzuzwana nje, ngisaphelelwe, ngiqedwa amandla yilesi siga esehlele uPhilip, izabe isithelekile phezu kwami lembombo yabantu. Bazangivathuza ngemiqwayi, bangikahlele bangivoxe ngamajambo. Bazathi ukungiqunga ngephethro ngiyizwe isehla ijuluka ngomzimba. Izaphithikana ingqondo yami, ngokuphazima kwelihlo ngizibone sengikhonale ko Bulawayo, ekhaya. Abezimota balele edwendweni lwephethro, kuthi abaswelayo bona balayinele ipharafini yama phremastofu abo. Abezimota bayifuna kabuhlungu lephethro ehla igeleza ngomzimba

wami, ingiphandla ngapha ingihitsha; ibika khona ukuthi lamuhla okwami emhlabeni kungahle kuphele. Kwaze kwafanelana ukufa kwami lokuthi ngizalwa kwaBulawayo – lapho okwakubulawa khona abantu. KoBulawayo, idolobho lami, indawo eyayisaziwa ngokubulawa kwezinduna zenkosi; indawo eyasungulwa ngamaZulu ayethole isikhala sokuphunyuka embusweni kaTshaka. Ngiyakuzwa emathanjeni ami ukuthi yonke indawo ebengikuyo, bengingumuntu wokuza nxa sibalisa ngembali langokuzalwa. Ayikho indawo engingathi kukithi mdabuko. Lolusuku kutsho ukuthi lwaluvele luhleliwe empilweni, lwabekwa ngokhokho bami bona abake baphila ngokubaleka samvundla. Zizangisinda inyawo zami, zale khona ukusukuma. Zizakuthi dlengelele, zona lezi sibili ezangichaphisa uNgulukudela, ngibalekela amapholisa lezikliwi umango wonke, ngiquma emapulazini ezithelo. Yizo futhi lezi nyawo esezibhudule izitalada zeJohannesburg ezingcolileyo, ngithi ngifeze iphupho lami lemali enengi. Namuhla zizangihlamukela. Zingitshale ukuthi owazo umsebenzi usuphelile – zale ukungithwala. Ngizakuthi lapho ngisiwa, ngisiya kuthi ga ngesiphundu, ngifise ukucabanga ubuhle bezulu likaMdali, ngifise ukuyakhona. Izulu likhaya lokuphumula, loba nje isimo salo singangicaceli kühle. Angisoze ngisithole lesikhathi sokucabanga ubuhle bezulu ngoba ngizakubona uklwebha umentshisi. Ngobugwala langenzodo osulayo, uzawudlulisela kumfelokazi uMasechaba, lo olomkakhe owayeliqhawe loMkhonto weSizwe. Kuzakuba saphupho elibi kimi ukumbona lomama olobuso obungathi abugugi, olezinqe i-Africa eziqhenya ngazo, engichilela amakhala, engikhafulela emehlweni asephandlwe yiphethro, qede anwebe imilomo, asekele istiki somentshisi esibhebhayo. Lizathi lisiwa kancane kancane ilangabi lestiki somentshisi, lisehla okosiba lwenyoni, ngizazibonela ukuthi elokufa selingitholile. Namuhla, mina muntu wokuza ngizakufa. Ngifela khona ukuba ngumuntu wokuza. Ngifa nje ngifela amafufu ngoba wena labanye bakho lithi yimi engenza lidubeke njengabantu abaNsundu; lidubeke lehluleke ukukholisa inkululeko yelizwe lenu.

Kuzakuba ngokunye ukuzithola sengibhebha, ngisukuma njalo ngidayeka, ngizizwe ngibongolela. Wonke muntu ohlala emikhukhwini le, uzakuzwa ukubongolela kwami, kuzathinta kubo usinga lokuba ngumuntu – ukuthi sonke singabazingeli sibuye sibe yinyamazana ezingelwayo; ukuthi sonke silesidingo sokuzwakala lapho sikhala, isidingo sokuphepha, isidingo sokusizwa ngabanye bethu.

Angikufuni ukufa. Kodwa ukuphaphatheka kwami, kuzavuthela amalangabi omlilo. Ngizakuwa phansi, ngithembe ngingathemba ukuthi mhlawumbe ukhona ozangizwela isihawu. Kodwa hatshi, uzangitshengisa ukujula kwenzondo lomona engangingakaze ngiphuphe ngakho. Uzathutsha

uhlome ngethaya. Ngizawuzwa umnuko wenwele zami ziqala ukutsha, zizeziphele du. Ngizabuzwa ubuhlungu kuzo zonke izitho zomzimba, sitho sinye ngasinye. Ngibuzwe ubuhlungu bokutsha ngiphila. Amaphaphu wona esegcwele umoya otshisayo, ngiwezwe ephela umoya ethula zwi. Amehlo wona azakuthi asebone kwenela, agunquke abebomvu gebhu, engasaboni ukuthi isikhumba sami sesitshe sabamnyama okwamalahle. Sizadonseka, siqhekezeke, sivuthwe isikhumba sami. Ngizaqhatsha; inyawo lezandla kuzenzela okwakho, umzimba wonke ucine ngokudikiza okokucina umphefumulo usuvalalisa. Hamba. Mana. Hamba. Mana. Kungani ungasahambi?

Lesi yiso isikhathi esilukhuni kunkemenkeme yonke le. Isikhathi lapho ubudlwangudlwangu obuphela khona, usale usumdambiyana. Awusacabangi ngendlela obucabanga ngayo labanye bakho ngesikhathi lizitshela ukuthi abokuza babi, batshontsha imisebenzi; umfowenu yisitha sakho njalo bonke abokuza kumele babulawe. Umzwangedwa usukutholile! Usuzibuza ukuthi konke lokhu okwenzekileyo, ukucabange njani ekuqaleni. Sokuthule cwaka ngalesisikhathi. Ubudlova lokuyangeka okukhulu sekusemoyeni wona kanye owuphefumulayo. Labo obulabo, ungababona! Bonke sebethe phulukundlu batshona phansi okomswenya besesaba isigwebo salesisiga. Ukugwetshwa? Kuvela ngaphi? Ungakhohlwa phela ukuthi ngingumuntu wokuza, kithi akulapha, kukude. Okuyintathelizindaba okusanda kuqala umsebenzi kuzabala indaba ngami kuthi:

‘Kulomuntu ongaziwayo, okucatshangelwa ukuthi ubelibhoda jampa obehhlala emkhukhwini yase Diepsloot eJohannesburg, otshiswe ngabantu abangaziwayo. Amapholisa acabangela ukuthi lesi sehlakalo besifuqwa yinzondo abakuleli abalayo ebantwini bokuza. Lesi siga siza ngemva kwensuku ezingamatshumi amane kuphele umncintiswano womhlaba wonke webhola oka 2010, lapha kweleMzansi.’

Yiyo yodwa lintathelizindaba, elesifiso sokuphumelela kulo msebenzi wayo, ezangipha okungumkhumbulo okungatsho lutho. Phela iyabe isilitholile ithuba lokwazakala, ukuze izithole layo isiseceleni kwalabo ababala izindaba kuze kuse. Uzabamazi lundoda. Uzamthanda, umethembe. Muhle, ligeza, uhlala eshevile indevu. Ulomnyama nje kuphela owokuthi nxa ebobotheka, akufiki emehlweni akhe. Uyakuthanda ukubukwa lokuziqakathekisa. Ufisa ukubalodumo inkalakatha. Ngikhuluma nje, uzibona esekubanga laboChristiane Amanpour, esethula izindaba zabo Bosnia, oBernard Shaw empini yeGulf, akhohlwe nje ukuthi lamaqhawe okuthapha izindaba, ngitsho lokuthi betsho elilodwa ngokwenzakala khonapha eduze, eRwanda. Uzibona ewutshintsha umhlaba ngendaba azethulayo. Asazi kumbe uyakwenza lokhu. Lanxa ekwenza, akuncedi mina

engoniweyo kulendaba. Kasoze ayitshutshise eyami indaba, ikakhulu namuhla. Akekho ozagwetshwa ngenxa yalokhu abangenze khona. Yikho-ke lawe mngane wami, akukho okuzakuvelela ungakhetha ukungibulala ngalindlela.

Ngesikhathi uphuma ijumo usithi ufuna ukungizingela ungibulale, zibuze ukuthi uzakuzwa njani nxa usungibulele. Ngileqiniso ukuthi kukhona ozakuzwa embilini wakho. Kambe ukuthi uzazibuza uthi, “*Sengenzeni?*” Mhlawumbe hatshi. Uyabe ungasazenzi. Uyabe usungokuyinyamazana okufuna ukuziphandela, ubuntu lengqondo sekuthuthile. Kambe kungakukhanyela ukuthi usungokuyinto nje okudonswa ngamakhala, kusetshenziswa; inkomo yomdaka ekhonyelwayo? Kungafika yini engqondweni yakho ukuthi wahlangana lo Geppetto lo, wakufunza ngamanga, wakukhohlisa, wakutshela izinto ezingekhoyo ngenswelo zakho? Ekucineni usuzibona usungoswelayo, kukanti ekuqaleni kwakungenjalo? Khathesi awusatholi kudla okweneleyo, awuselangwalo zokuthola ulwazi, awusela msebenzi owokuthi lawe uzizwe ungumuntu ebantwini, lezikhundla ezingaphezulu azisekho. Wonke la amanga lenkohliso yizinto osewazifundisa abantwabakho, labazukulu bakho. Namuhla, njengodoli wamakhiwa uPinocchio, lo othi angaqamba amanga ikhala lakhe libe lide sonke sikhathi, elakho lalo ikhala selilide, selithungatha okubi. Selikwenze wakhohlwa izinto ezinengi; wakhohlwa leqiniso. Iqiniso yileli: *ngingumfowenu*. Uzakubona yini ukuthi isenzo sakho lesi senza okunye kutshabalale kumchilo wamakhosikazi lo isizwe sakini esizibona siyiwo ngemibala yabantu etshiyeneyo? Uzakubona yini ukuthi ukhona osetshontshe imbiza yegolide kulomchilo wamakhosikazi, hatshi mina?

Ngizwisisa mfowethu. Agifuni kufa. Ngilele phansi lapha, izitho zami zisima ukusebenza, zicitsha njengezibane zendlu elezibane ezinengi, sezicitshwa sinye ngasinye – okusele kimi lithemba, ithemba lokuthi mhlawumbe ngizaphepha ngoba umuntu evele wadalelwa ukuphila. Asifunisele sithi konke lokhu engikhuluma ngakho kungenzakala, kuzekufike kubanga lokuthi ukhetha ukungibulala ngenxa yokuthi impilo yakho inzima okokuthi awusazi ukuthi wenzeni, esami isikhali kuzaba yikufuna ukuphila. Phela mina kimi impilo ibalulekile. Ngizitshela ukuthi ikusasa izakuba ngcono. Okukhulu yiyo impilo kuphela. Okunengi angizihluphi ngakho. Ithemba lokuthi ngizaphila ngenze okunengi empilweni yami, ngithole ongithandayo, lami engimthandayo, lenza kube nzima kimi ukuthi ngivume ukulahlekelwa yimpilo mahlayana nje. Angililahli ithemba, ngiyayithanda impilo! Impi yonke le ngiyinikela kubutho lami elilodwa, elithiwa ngunembeza. Abanye bathi unembeza kaqinanga, uyephuka ezandleni zezithandani ezilochuku. Bathi ungabona

abantu besenza okubi kungathi thiki kubo, abalaye unembeza. Unembeza bathi uyopha nxa ebona ukuhlupheka kwabanye; uyatsha atshabalale ungasutha kakhulu, uyantininiza nxa ujabulile, ezwe ubuhlungu nxa ungafelwa ngomthandayo. Kanganani unembeza, yisitho esingangesibhakela. Engikufunayo yikutshaya kukanembeza. Ngeke. Ngife. Ngeke. Ngife. Ngeke. Ngife. Ngeke. Ngeke. Ngife. Ngeke.

Uvaleke ngolaka umnyango. *Sokutheni?* Usungikhangele ngabuzayo. *Uzwile nje ukuthi bengisithini?* Ini? Isitshaya ngamandla inhliziyo yami. Ukuhlaba kwelanga sokungiphandla. Kulapha enginanzelela khona ukuthi sesehlile emtshoveni, sengimi eceleni komgwaqo, izandla zami seziginqe okwesabekayo, njalo sengiphefumula kanzima. *Awusathathanga lenamba zakhe zecellphone m' fethu?* Usuzibuza uziphendule, unikine ikhanda. Nguwe lowa usiyazithengela *amagwinya* ekhoneni. Lapha engimi khona, abantu bayaphithizela befuna ukwenza konke abakunxwaneleyo lingakabatshoneli lelilanga lebusika.

Abalobi abakuleli qoqo lezindatshana

URaisedon Baya ngumlobi lomqondisi wemidlalo ye*theatre* odumileyo. Phezu kwalokhu, ungumlobi wendatshana abuye abe ngomunye wabakhulu abakhangele ezokuloba leminyane imicimbi yezamasiko enziwa koBulawayo, idolobho lesibili ngobukhulu eZimbabwe. Eminye yemidlalo yakhe ekholisekayo itholakala kugwalo lwakhe lwemidlalo oluthiwa *Tomorrow's People*. URaisedon ulocezu kwelinye lamaphephandaba esizwe, lapho aloba khona ngezamasiko lezokuzijabulisa. Indatshana zakhe uzazithola zidindwe kungwalo lakumamagazini.

UNoViolet Bulawayo ngumlobi wakuleli eZimbabwe olesifiso sokuba ngumenzi wamafilemu odumileyo. Indatshana yakhe u“Snapshots,” yakhethwa yaba ngeyinye yezimbalwa sekudingwa umnqobi we 2009 SA Pen/Studzinski Award. Indatshana yakhe u“Hitting Budapest” yiyo eyanqobayo kumncintiswano wokuloba kuzwekazi leAfrica, i Caine Prize for African Writing ngo 2011. Inoveli yakhe yokuqala ethiwa *We Need New Names* yakhethwa yaba ngenye yezingwalo ezazingathola umvuzo ka 2013 owe Man Booker Prize. Lolugwalo lwangena kuluhlu olude olwengwalo ezazingathola umvuzo ka 2013 owe Guardian First Book Award.

UDiana Charsley ngowakuleli eleZimbabwe. Indatshana zakhe uzithola zidindwe engwalweni ezibuthelela indatshana ezilotshwe ngohlonzi. Ungumuntu okhonza uMlimu njalo usebenzela iBulawayo Help Network.

UMapfumo Clement Chihota usanda kuphemba ikhaya elitsha edolobheni leAuckland ezweni leNew Zealand, lapho ahlala khona lemuli yakhe. Engakayi lapho, ukewafunda wabuye wafundisa eUniversity of Cape Town eSouth Africa. Mandulo, ubekewasebenza eZimbabwe Open University, emakolitshini okuqeqetsha ababalisi iSeke leNyadire, kunye laseMurewa High School. UClement usedindise inkondlo eZimbabwe leSouth Africa, wadindisa indatshana e Zimbabwe, eSouth Africa, eAmerica kunye leUK.

UMurenga Joseph Chikowero usanda kuthola isicoco sePhD eUniversity of Wisconsin-Madison.

UJohn Eppel wazalwa eSouth Africa ngo 1947 wakhulela eZimbabwe okwahle kwaba kibo. Ufundisa isiNgisi eChristian Brothers College koBulawayo. Inoveli yakhe yokuqala, *D G G Berry's The Great North Road* yathola umklomelo we M-Net prize yabuye yafakwa kuluhlu lwezingwalo eze*Weekly Mail & Guardian* lapho kukhethwa ingwalo ezingamatshumi amabili eziyizo eziphuma phambi kwezinye nxa kukhangelwe ingwalo zesiLungu ezadindwa eSouth Africa phakathi kweminyaka 1948 kusiya ku1994. Ugwalo lwakhe lwesibili, u*Hatchings* lwaba ngolunye lwezingwalo ezakhethwayo kudingwa umnqobi we M-Net prize. Lolugwalo lwakhethwa yi*Times Literary Supplement* njengolunye lwezingwalo eziqakathekileyo kuzwekazi leAfrica. Ezinye ingwalo zakhe yilezi: *The Giraffe Man*, *The Curse of the Ripe Tomato*, *The Holy Innocents*, *Absent: The English Teacher*, *The Boy Who Loved Camping* lo *Traffickings*.

Ingwalo zakhe zenkondlo zigoqela u*Spoils of War*. Lolugwalo lwathola umvuzo we Ingrid Jonker prize. Ezinye ingwalo zakhe zenkondlo ngu*Sonata for Matabeleland*, *Selected Poems: 1965 – 1995*, lo*Songs My Country Taught Me*. Ulezinye ingwalo ezihlanganisa indatshana lenkondlo ezithi zona: *The Caruso of Colleen Bawn*, *White Man Crawling*, lo*Together*. Ugwalo lokucina waluloba ebambisana lomuyi u Julius Chingono. Lolugwalo lube ngolunye lwezingwalo ezikhethiweyo ukuthi zingathola uklomelo we Pushcart prize.

Indatshana zika Eppel kunye lenkondlo zakhe sekudindwe engwalweni ezinengi ezibuthelela indatshana lenkondlo; kokubili ukuthola njalo kuma jenali laku intanethi, kugoqela inkondlo zakhe eziyisithupha ozithola kugwalo *Penguin Anthology of South African Poetry*. Inkondlo yakhe ethiwa 'Vendor and Child' yakhethwa ngabadindi bezingwalo lamamagazini abe *New Internationalist* bona abanqineke ngezamalungelo oluntu, njengenye yezinkondlo ezilikhulu eminyakeni elikhulu ezivusa usinga mayelana ngamalungelo oluntu. Inkondlo le yadindwa lezinye kugwalo oluthiwa *Fire in the Soul*. Inkondlo yakhe elesihloko esithi 'Jasmine,' yakhethwa yabayinkondlo yeviki (Poem of the Week) kuphephandaba lase Britain, i*Guardian*.

UFungai Rufaro Machirori wafundela ubuntathelizindaba okugcweleyo. Ubuya njalo abe yimbongikazi, alobe futhi irisetshi kunye lezindatshana zokuzibumbela. Ulesiphiwo njalo sokufaka indaba ku-internet, lokhu okuthiwa yiblogging. Usebenze kakhulu esakaza nge HIV le AIDS, ecubungula isimo seZimbabwe le South Africa. Ngo 2007, wathola umvuzo wokuba ngomunye kuzwekazi le Africa owenze umsebenzi obukekayo

kundaba zemikhankaso ye HIV le AIDS. Inkondlo zakhe ulakho ukuzithola kugwalo lokuqala kweleZimbabwe olwezimbongikazi, oluthiwa *Sunflowers in Your Eyes*.

UBarbara Mhangami-Ruwende ngumlobi njalo usebenza kweze-mpilakahle e-United States. Mdabuko, uyisizalwane seZimbabwe. Ulezicoco zemfundo yangaphezulu azithola eUniversity of Glasgow yaseScotland, iJohns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health kunye leWalden University. Ezinye zezindatshana zakhe ungazithola kuJenali yeintanethi ethiwa *Storytime*. Ezinye ungazithola kuqoqo *African Roar* kuthi ezinye zikundawo yakhe ye-intanethi ehlose ukukhulula abesifazana ethiwa *Her Zimbabwe*. Kanti lakugwalo oluthiwa *Still*, uyazithola indatshana zakhe. Inkondlo zakhe zadindwa kugwalo, *Muse for Women*. Okwamanje uloba ugwalo lwendatshana kunye lenoveli.

UChristopher Mlalazi uloba indatshana lamanoveli, inkondlo, imidlalo yetheatre kunye leyethelevizhini. Izindatshana zakhe zitholakala engwalweni ezadindwa eZimbabwe, eSouth Africa, eUnited Kingdom, eUnited States of America kunye laku intanethi. Ngomnyaka ka 2008, waba ngomunye wababili abathola umvuzo we-Oxfam Novip PEN Freedom Of Expression, kungumvuzo womdlalo othiwa *The Crocodile Of Zambezi*, awuloba lomunye umlobi. Umdlalo lo wavinjwa yiziphathamandla kwathiwa awufanelanga ukwenziwa kweleZimbabwe njalo logwalo lwakhona aluvunyelwa kuleli. Ugwalo lwakhe lokuqala olwezindatshana, *Dancing with Life: Tales from the Township*, lwaqhweba abe Noma Awards abakhangelane lokudindwa kwengwalo ezinhle eAfrica, abapha lolugwalo abayithi yiHonourable Mention ngo 2009. Ngo 2010 wathola umklomelo we NAMA kulandela umdlalo wakhe othiwa *Election Day*. Inoveli yakhe yokuqala ethiwa *Many Rivers*, yadindwa ngo 2009, kuzothi eyesibili, *Running With Mother*, ngo 2012. Eyesithathu ethiwa *They Are Coming*, izaphuma ngo 2014. Okwamanje ungumlobi oyisethekeli eUniversity yeHannover eGermany okwesikhathi esihlanganisa u2013 lo2014.

UMzana Mthimkhulu wazalelwa esibhedlela sakoBulawayo esikhulu, iMpilo, sona esikhangelane lenkundla enkulu yeBarbourfields, eyiyo inkundla yaMahlolanyama, iHighlanders Football Club. Uthe esiba leminyaka engamatshumi amabili wazibonela laye ukuthi wayengasayikwenelisa ukudlalela iqembu le Highlanders elabadlali abaleminyaka engaphansi kwetshumi lesitshiyagalolunye (Under 19). Uthe esebona sekunjalo wathi kungcono azame ukungena kuqembu lakuqala,

okuyilo elithenjiweyo. Kodwa uthe ebamba amatshumi amathathu eminyaka engakangeni leqenjini lesibili elithiwa *yireserve* ngesiLungu, wakubona kungcono ukuthi azame ukuba ngumqeqetshi omkhulu khona kuHighlanders. Kwathi-ke ebamba iminyaka engamathsumi amane waphosa waba ngumsizi kamsekeli kakhutshi omkhulu. Njengomuntu ongalahli ithemba kalula, okwamanje usesebenzela ukuba ngumgcini sihlalo waleli qembu. Esalindele ukungena kulesisikhundla, uchitha isikhathi eloba indatshana, eloba emaphephandabeni ngokwenzakala empilweni abuye akhokhele emsebenzini ngezokuqhatshwa lamalungelo ezisebenzi. UMzana uthethe njalo ulabantwana abathathu. Akuthandayo ngumnuko wezingwalo ezindala kanye lokubona isikhukhukazi silamatsiyane aso.

UBlessing Musariri ngumlobi ophumeleleyo oseke wathola imivuzo yokuloba ingwalo zabantwana. Kunengi okunye aziwa ngakho. Indatshana zakhe lezinkondlo sekwadindwa ngezinye zezingcitshi zokudinda ingwalo umhlaba wonke jikelele, okuhlanganisela lamamagazini e-intanethi. Wayezitshela ukuthi uzakuba ligqwetha uBlessing, nanku phela waphumelela lakumazamanitshini awe English Bar Finals ngo 1997. Kwaphanga kwamkhanyela ukuthi qha, ingqondo yakhe ehlala iphuphuma ezibumbela khona ayingeke ikumele ukuba ligqwetha. Waseqala ezokuloba. Kwathi lanxa kwakungayisiyo indlela abeyicabangile ekuqaleni, wathola ukusuthiseka ekulobeni, loba nje indlela yakhona isiba mazombezombe kwesinye isikhathi. Ulesicoco seMasters in Diplomatic Studies asithola ngokuthanyela wonke umsebenzi walesi sicoco (with distinction) e-University of Westminster. Esikhathini esinengi uBlessing uhlala esigodlweni sakuleli eHarare, kodwa nxa engekho eHarare wandise ukutholakala emoyeni endizamtshineni esiya lapha lalaphaya.

UNyevero Muza, uthethe njalo ulabantwana ababili. Wafundela ezokugcina imali emabhenki, okuyiwo umsebenzi wakhe. Ulefemu ecebisa abantu ngezokuzalisa imali. Ifemu le wayiqala lomunye asebenzisana laye. Sikhathi sinye, ulocezwana kwelinye lamaphephandaba akuleli lapho aloba khona ngazo indaba zemali. UOmen ule Diploma yokubhenka kunye lesicoco sezamabhizini, iMBA. Indatshana zakhe ungazithola ku-intanethi. Enye yezinto azenzayo nxa ephumula ezomsebenzi, yikutshaya ikatali.

UThabisani Ndlovu wakhulela koBulawayo. Imfundo yangaphezulu wayenzela e-University of Zimbabwe lapho athola khona isicoco seMasters in English. Uke wafundisa eSiwazi Secondary School eFilabhusi, ePlumtree School kunye le Falcon College Esigodini. Ngemva kokuthola isicoco

sePhD eWits University eJohannesburg, usebenze njengomqondisi weInternational Human Rights Exchange lapho eWits. Indatshana zakhe ungazithola kumaqoqo athi: *Creatures Great and Small, Short Writings from Bulawayo III, Long Time Coming: Short Writings from Zimbabwe* kanye le *TheCaine Prize for African Writing, 2009*. Ezinye zitholakala ku-intanethi.

UBryony Rheam uzelwe eKadoma ngo 1974, wahlala koBulawayo kusukela eleminyaka eyisifika minwe mibili waze waqeda isikolo. Wathola isicoco seMA in English Literature eUnited Kingdom, wasefundisa okomyaka eSingapore andubana aphenduke eZimbabwe lapho aqhubeka khona ngokufundisa kusukela kumnyaka ka 2001 kusiya ku 2008. Okwamanje uhlala lomkakhe labantwababo ababili eSolwezi kweleZambia. Ulokhe engumbalisi uBryony. Indatshana zakhe ungazithola kumaqoqo eZimbabwe amanengi. Inoveli yakhe yokuqala ethiwa *This September Sun*, yathola uklokelo weBest First Book ngo 2010 ku Zimbabwe Book Publishers Association Awards. Ugwalo lolu lwadindwa ngabe Parthian e-UK ngo 2012, kwasekusithi ngo 2013 labayilo elisemqoka ku Amazon Kindle.

UNovuyo Rosa Tshuma ngumlobi wenoveli ethiwa *Shadows*. Indatshana zakhe sezike zathola umklomelo we Yvonne Vera Award zabuye zancanywa zangena kuluhlu olufitshane olomklomelo weZimbabwe Achievers Literature Award. Sewake waba ngomunye wabalobi ababuthaniswa kukhulunywa ngokubhala kubuye kubhalwe. Imbuthano enjengale ayingenayo yiCaine Prize Workshop kunye le Farafina Workshop. Okwakhathesi uqhubeka ngezifundo zeMasters in Fine Arts e-University of Iowa, ebindana lakho ukuloba.

USandisile Tshuma wazalwa wakhulela koBulawayo. Ngemva kweminyaka emithathu yokutaditsha iChemical, Molecular and Cellular Sciences e-University yeCape Town, waphenduka ekhaya wazokwenza izifundo ze Development and Disaster Management eNational University of Science and Technology. Okwakhathesi uhlala eJohannesburg njalo utaditsha ukuthi athole isicoco seMasters in Public Health. Usebenzela i-UNESCO ngaphansi komhlubulo weMpumalanga leZansi Africa kugatsha lweHIV and AIDS Support Team. Indatshana kaSandisile ethiwa *Arrested Development*, eyadindwa laku*Long Time Coming:Short Writings from Zimbabwe*, yaqanjwa njengenye yezindatshana ezibhalwe kahle, eyayilamathuba amakhulu okuthola umklomelo we Thomas Pringle Award ngo 2010. Umvuzo lo uphiwa indatshana ehlabusayo ukwedlula zonke ezithe

zadindwa emaphephandabeni lakumajenali eZansi kwe Africa, nxa kukhangelwa iminyaka embili esanda kwedlula.

Indatshana eziqoqwe lapha ziyasinda, zizwisa usizi lobuhlungu, kanti zibuye zihlekise. Zonke zithathela kusimo esibi esake sabakhona eZimbabwe esaziwa ngokuthi "iminyaka elitshumi eyalahlekayo." Kwakuyisikhathi sokuphela kwemali amandla lokuqonga kwentengo okungakaze kubonakale; isikhathi sodlame lobudlwangudlwangu; esokutshabalala kwenotho yelizwe kanye lokuphuma kwabantu ngobunengi besiyaphephela kwamanye amazwe. Ngemva kwalokho bonke abantu beZimbabwe sebezibuza - Siqondephi Manje? Bonke abalendatshana lapha yizizalwane zeZimbabwe. Noma nje abanye babo beloba bephandle kwelizwe, ugqozi lwabo luphuma khona eZimbabwe, lendatshana zabo zikhuluma ngalo leli lizwe.

Emakhasini alolugwalo uzahlangana lolondindwa onyomuka emjibileni wabanewakhe okumendisa engafuni; umama owendileyo ophunyuka ecaleni lokulala lenye indoda; iqhawe eligqumukela embizeni enkulu yamasese lifele lapho; imbongi engatholi sikhathi sokuhaya inkondlo yayo. Azipheleli lapho. Zikhona ezinye ezinengi.

Raisedon Baya
NoViolet Bulawayo
Diana Charsley
Mapfumo Clement Chihota
Murenga Joseph Chikowero
John Eppel
Fungai Rufaro Machirori
Barbara Mhangami-Ruwende
Christopher Mlazi
Mzana Mthimkhulu
Blessing Musariri
Nyevero Muza
Thabisani Ndlovu
Bryony Rheam
Novuyo Rosa Tshuma
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